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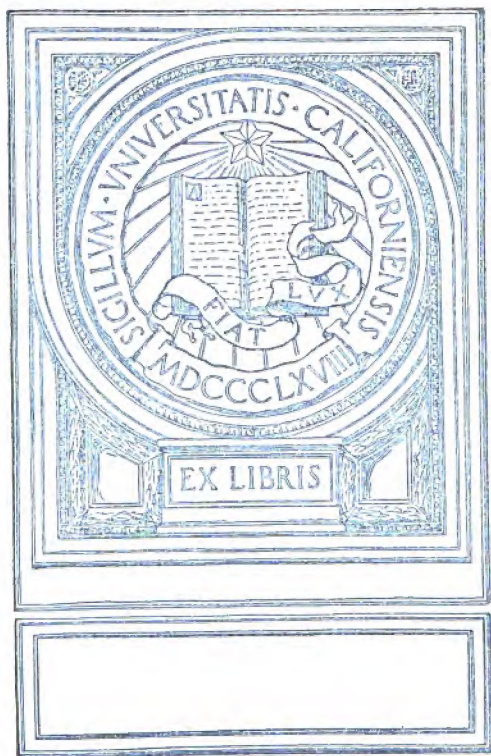
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A
HISTORY
OF THE
SABBATARIANS

OR

SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS,
IN AMERICA.

CONTAINING
THEIR RISE AND PROGRESS

To the year 1811,

WITH THEIR
LEADERS' NAMES,

AND THEIR
DISTINGUISHING TENETS, &c.

BY HENRY CLARKE,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BROOKFIELD, COUNTY
OF MADISON, STATE OF NEW-YORK.

Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.—St. Paul.

Utica :

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1811.

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TO THE CANDID READER.

THE following narrative is taken from the most authentic sources that I could, practicably, obtain; and is thought to be the most correct account of the Sabbatarians in America, that may be obtained in the present state of things. It is well known, that the first English inhabitants of America were of another denomination of christians; and in their first settlements were not only most numerous, but retained all power of a legislative nature in their own hands, and was zealous of their way even to persecution of all other sects; (but let us cast a veil over such conduct in christians)—consequently they had the controul of all the records, and all the seminaries of learning in this country; which circumstance together with the trouble all our forefathers had by the convulsions in Europe in the time of Cromwell, &c. with the conflicts with the native Indians, and doubtless great neglect on the part of the Sabbatarians about keeping and transmitting to posterity their own affairs—all conspire to render their history obscure.

Again; the present difficulties in church and state affairs, generally the scarcity of cash, and the inattention, illiberality and great neglect of some sections of the community in forwarding the necessary information timely, has made it impracticable for the author (who has no leisure) to pay that attention by transcribing, inspecting and correcting the work, he would been glad to have done;—which together with his own inability may render the work incomplete. The most he can expect is to make a plain, faithful beginning, and leave to time and abler pens to make improvements, as leisure may serve—and he trusts the candid inquirer after truth

will be more intent for matters of fact, than elegance of diction.

The method pursued in the book, will be, first, by an introduction; secondly, by taking up the churches as they were organized; thirdly, general remarks, and if the limits of the book will admit, give some arguments, on their distinguishing tenets, &c. The materials of this History will be taken from the bible, and other histories, manuscripts, and letters or written memorandums ancient and modern; and from church records, (of which notice will be given in the work) together with the author's personal knowledge—as he has been intimately acquainted with the affairs of the Sabbatarians for the last forty years; and has visited nearly all the churches in the Union, of that sect; and has had personal acquaintance with, I believe, every ordained preacher, now living, of their order; as also nearly all the elders that have been living in that order for fifty years past.—And being in part sensible of the responsibility of an author, he is determined to be as accurate, as to matters of fact related, as possible.

That it may meet the approbation of the great Judge of all—and by divine Providence be, in some degree, beneficial to the cause of Truth, and pure Religion among his fellow mortals—is the sincere wish, and fervent prayer, of the public's humble servant,

HENRY CLARKE.

Brookfield, Feb. }
27, 1811. *}*

HISTORY, &c.

THE word *Sabbatarian*, appears to be a very appropriate term applied to those people who hold the seventh day of the week as the Lord's Sabbath. And whether that name was first assumed by the Seventh-day Baptists, or was given them by their opponents, is to me uncertain and immaterial.

As the seventh day of the week is, in divine Revelation so positively and abundantly commanded to be sanctified as a Sabbath, by God himself; and not the least colour of a command from God, in all the scriptures, for any other day of the week as a weekly sabbath; and as baptism was expressly commanded by the divine Saviour, and so abundantly confirmed and practised by scripture accounts, (of which we shall say more hereafter, if the Lord will) we as rational christians, have no objections to have such an appellation to distinguish our sect. Believing we have the command of God, and the example of our divine Saviour, as also his apostles and the primitive christians, to support the principal doctrines we profess;—and was it not for the numerous persecutions, and the corrupt practices and doctrines of professors of the christian religion, together with the tyranny of princes, popes, &c. and the various convulsions that have taken place in the world in church and state, in such a length of time; it is more than probable, that we

might trace a regular succession, from our Saviour's days to the present time, of our main doctrines and ministry. But such has been the fate of the christian system, that by false Christs (as Mahomet and others) and enthusiastic and fanatical leaders ; together with the pride, arrogance and power of the popes, and tyranny of princes ; and by connecting ecclesiastical and political affairs together, in such a way as to destroy vital piety, as is abundantly evident by Mosheim's, and other history, that it is now difficult for any one denomination of christians to trace their succession, with certainty, from the apostles' days. However, it is evident, from Mosheim and other historians, that a considerable portion of christians have, at all times since the apostles' days, been in the observation of the seventh day as a Sabbath. Witness the Abyssinian church, and some others, that are known of at this day ; who have not ever been, any considerable time, subject to the pope's jurisdiction—and yet retain the seventh day of the week for a Sabbath, as may be seen by several historians. [*See the Abbe Milot's General History, vol. 2.*]

As to the article Baptism, I conclude there are few, if any, in the christian part of the world, but will own it of divine appointment ; and that it has ever been practised by the most of professed christians from our Saviour's days, (however they may differ in sentiment about the candidates to it, and the mode of performing it)—and although it may be a matter of doubt, whether any one of the christian sects now extant, retain all the christian rites and doctrines uncorrupt ; and, if charity will allow all sects to have some of them, as all mortals are imperfect in sentiment as well as practice,—yet it must be allowed, that those who come the nearest to the di-

vine pattern, are the rightest. And if God is concerned for his own honour, who alone has a right to institute and command, and will punish man for disobedience and for making void his law by their traditions, or vainly think to worship him by teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, &c.—how should it concern souls, to have a *Thus saith the Lord* for their faith and practice.

But leaving disputed points of divinity to the learned, or to some future opportunity, let us attend more immediately to the rise of the Seventh-day Baptists in North America.

It is evident from Mr. Isaac Backus' history of New-England, [*vol. 1, page 53, &c.*] that soon after the first planting of Massachusetts, and as early as Feb. 5th, 1631, Mr. Roger Williams came from England to America; that he was of good report as a godly and zealous preacher; and had been some years employed in the ministry in England. He preached at Plymouth two or three years; and also at Salem about two years; where he was ordained, (I conclude in the Congregational fellowship) and not long after, was banished Massachusetts territory, for holding or teaching, what then was called Anabaptist sentiments. Mr. Williams then went to what is now called Providence, and obtained lands of the Indians, and became the founder of the state of Rhodeisland. He also, it appears, received other white settlers with himself; and was baptized in the year 1639 by a lay-man, as he could not obtain an administrator to baptize by immersion, in America. And said Williams was the constitutor of the first Baptist church in America, and second in the British dominions.

As Mr. Backus has done ample justice to the memory of that pious and benevolent man, in his said History, I shall leave him and observe, that by comparing Mr. Backus' History and Mr. Calender's, which was written long before his, as to the rise of the first Baptist church in America, it appears to me that Mr. Williams did not long have the lead in said first church; but rather that Mr. John Clarke (whom I expect was a member with Mr. Williams, and probably was baptized and ordained by Mr. Williams) took the lead in said first Baptist church, soon after it was constituted; as Mr. Calender styles Mr. Clarke, the first pastor of the first Baptist church in America, and they both agree that said church was formed about the year 1644. And as I have not obtained any satisfactory information, but that the gathering of the Baptists at Providence and at Newport under the care of Mr. John Clarke, were considered as but one church, I shall consider them as such at the date of the year 1644.

It also appears by Mr. Backus' History [*vol. 2, page 39*] that the said church divided on the principle of laying on of hands, about the year 1656—and William Vaughan was their first leader—which I conclude was the rise of the six principal Baptists so called.

It also appears by Mr. Backus' History [*vol. 3, page 232 &c.*] compared with Mr. Calender's Sermon, preached at Newport at the commencement of the year 1700 and Church Minutes, &c.—that Mr. Stephen Mumford came over from England in the year 1664; and brought the opinion with him, that the whole of the Ten Commands, as they were delivered from mount Sinai, were moral and immutable: and that it was the antichristian power which thought to change times and laws, that

changed the Sabbath from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week. And that several members of the first church in Newport embraced this sentiment; and (by Backus' History) finally a separation took place, in Dec. 1671—when William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Stephen Mumford, Roger Baxter and three Sisters, joined in covenant as a distinct church; and Mr. Hiscox was their first pastor, &c.

Mr. Calender states that, about the year 1665 a number of the members of the church under Mr. J. Clarke, removed to the new settlements at Westerly, among whom Mr. John Crandall was a preacher and elder.—They afterwards generally embraced the seventh-day Sabbath.

Mr. Backus says [*vol. 3, page 241*] Mr. John Crandall lived at Westerly before the separation took place on account of the Sabbath, as before stated, in 1671—that said Crandall was one of them that was imprisoned at Boston, in 1651, for Baptist sentiments, &c.—that it appears probable that those observers of the seventh-day Sabbath, from the year 1664 to the year 1671, (in America) remained in the church with their first-day brethren. In which time, I find mention made of several corresponding letters that passed between them and the seventh-day Baptists in London. Copies of several of them, I have now by me; and much regret that the limits of this book will not admit of more copious extracts from them; as also that the correspondence has not been renewed or kept up since the American war.

It is evident by those letters, and by the several volumes published by the reverend and learned Joseph Stennet, near one hundred years ago, that the numbers of the Sabbatarians in England must have been quite nu-

merous and respectable ; and that some of their leaders were in as great repute for learning and piety, as any other denomination of christians.

But such is our present circumstance, that I can only make some short extracts, &c. The earliest I have by me, is dated Feb. 2d, 1668, and is from Dr. Edward Stennet of the seventh-day Baptist church, meeting in Bell Lane London—and directed to the Sabbath-keepers in Rhodeisland.....Extracts :

“ Dearly Beloved,

I rejoice in the Lord on your behalf, in that he hath been graciously pleased to make known to you his holy Sabbath, in such a day as this ; when truth falleth in the streets and equity cannot enter. And with us we can scarcely find a man that is really willing to know, whether the Sabbath be a truth or not—and those who have the greatest parts, have the least anxiety to meddle with it.” (too similar to American people now) “ We have passed through great opposition for this truth sake, especially from our brethren, which made the affliction heavier. I dare not say how heavy, lest it should seem incredible.

“ But the opposers of truth seem much withered ; and at present the opposition seems to be dying away—for Truth is strong. This spiritual fiery law will burn up all those things that men do set before it : for was there ever any ceremonial law given us ? This law was given from the mouth of God, in the care of so many thousands—wrote on tables of stone with his own finger—promised to be wrote on the tables of their hearts—and confirmed by a miracle for the space of forty years in the wilderness. The manna not keeping good any day but the Sabbath, God gave them the bread of two

days, because he gave them the Sabbath. But whatever was gathered on the other days and kept until the next, stank and was full of worms. And no ceremonial law had the penalty of death annexed to it, to be inflicted by the magistrate, but the wilful profaner of the Sabbath was to be put to death by the magistrate, as the wilful murderer; which clearly proves it to be a moral law—as may be seen Exodus, 16th chap. and elsewhere; “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.” Luk. xvi 31.

“Here is in England about nine or ten churches that keep the Sabbath; besides many scattered disciples, who have been eminently preserved in this tottering day, when many eminent churches have been shattered to pieces.”

Extracts from a letter, dated 26th March, 1668, and signed in behalf of the church by eleven members—one of them, William Gibson.

“The church of Christ, meeting in Bell Lane, London, upon the Lord’s holy Sabbath; desiring to keep the Commandments of God, and the testimonies of Jesus—sendeth salutations to a remnant of the Lord’s Sabbath-keepers, in or about Newport (R. I.) in New-England—unfeignedly wishing all needful grace, truth and holiness, may be multiplied and increased in you more and more unto the perfect day.—

“Beloved and precious Brethren, although unknown to you by face, yet through grace trust we can call you so: being affected by hearing of you by our beloved brother John Cowel; and the more when we perceive the grace of God that is in you, by those choice and savoury letters you sent him, which he communicated to us: which, with his desire, hath encouraged us to write

unto you at this time, desiring that you may be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ—that in his day he will shew who is the blessed and only potentate, the king of kings and Lord of Lords. And not only so, but will also make manifest, both who are his, and what is his—that so his people may not through antichristian darkness or mistake, call light darkness, or darkness light; which evil is too much practised in the present day.

“So then it will be out of doubt, those vain objections, of no Sabbath or a seventh part of time, we shall then see that the ark wherein were the table laws only, will be there; the Lord will then make manifest that principles and precepts will stand together in a gospel church state.” &c.

Copy of a letter from Peter Chamberlain, senior, Doctor of both Universities, and first elect Physician in ordinary to his Majesty's person—Dated Sept. 15th, 1677, and addressed to the Governors of New-England:

“Peter Chamberlain, a servant of the word of God, to the excellent and noble Governors of New-England, grace, mercy, peace and truth from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ:—

“Most noble Governors, I humbly salute you in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: praying for you, that you may abound in heavenly grace and temporal comforts. I have always had a love to the intended purity, and unspotted doctrine of New-England—for Mr. Cotton was of the same University of Emanuel in Cambridge that I was, and several others, with whom we were all cotemporary; and I never knew them but of a

holy conversation. I was also acquainted with several others; all of whom have a share in the foundation of your government.—But, certainly, the first intentions were, never to deter the truths of scripture, and liberty of conscience guided thereby; but to suppress sin and idolatry, and prevent all the advances of Rome, to whom all things are lawful, and especially lies and hypocrisy, to promote their most damnable doctrines, and covetous supremacy.

“It is great wisdom to suppress sin, but not oppress the liberty of a good conscience; and while men grant liberty of conscience, not to admit liberty of sin. All magistrates have not attained to this wisdom; else England would long since been freed from Popery. “Whatsoever is against the Ten Commandments, is sin.” Rom. iii. 20. “and he that sinneth in *one* point, is guilty of *all*; because he that spake *one* word of them, spake *all*, and added no more:”—while Moses and Solomon do so much caution men against adding to, or taking from, Deut. iv. 2. and so doth the beloved apostle in Rev. xxii. 12, 19. What shall we say then, of those who take away those ten words, or of those that make them void, and teach men so, dare give the lie to Jehovah, and make Jesus Christ not only the breaker of the law, but the very author of sin in others causing them to break them.—Hath not the little horn played its part hastily in this, and worn out the saints of the Most High, so that they become like little horned men?

“If you are pleased to enquire about these things, or to require any assistance or information; be pleased, by your letters, to command it. From your humble servant in the Lord Jesus Christ,

PETER CHAMBERLAIN.”

I have now by me, another letter from Dr. Chamberlain, sent to Governor Breadstreet of Boston, much on the same subject—Also, several other letters, written about that time, by Mr. Joseph Davis, in England ; and a church letter from a Sabbatarian church in East Smithfield, London : together with lengthy memorandums and letters, written by Mr. Samuel Hubbard of Newport, relative to the affairs in church and state, about the time of the establishment of the first seventh-day Baptist church in America: but as most of them relate to the loving exhortations, cautions and advice, mutually given to each other in their correspondence ; as also, their resolutions, and feelings of their minds ; together with accounts of their sufferings and persecutions from other denominations of christians in power, (which no doubt are true, yet I think had better be forgotten—as it disgraces the christian name, and it is hoped the like will never take place again) I think it inexpedient to publish them :—hoping to fill the limits of this book with matters I conceive of more real advantage to the peace of society, the cause of God, and the souls of men.

It is quite observable, and the candid and judicious of all denominations of christians will notice it, that pure religion ever has been liable to suffer from two main sources ; viz. the pride, power, and wisdom of man ;—and from the ignorance, superstition, and enthusiasm of man.—No doubt the devil may assist both, all in his power.—The first is manifest by over-rating human literature ; the other by under valuing it : the first, gain on the passions of the young, the wealthy, and best informed ; the latter, on the poor, decrepid, and aged that are illiterate—And, on close inspection, we may see that

both have nearly one and the same fountain to rise from, even an evil, deceitful, carnal, selfish mind, that is not subject to the law of God; for where either have obtained numbers and power, they have, generally, persecuted their opponents. Witness, the bible account, and all ecclesiastical history. What a blessing it is, therefore, that God, in his word of divine Revelation, has made plain the duty and privileges of man, in the various concerns of life; that we might have a pole-star to steer by—even his law and gospel; which appear as inseparably connected together, to exhibit the character of God, and the accountability of man,—as the soul and body of man, to make a living creature. But if we leave that standard of divine truth, and follow our own vain conceit, or man's pretended revelation, when opposed to God's written word; alas, where shall we come out!

When we contemplate the causes of divisions in the church, generally, since the apostles' days, we find that the dissenters have alledged, as justification, either some new revelation, or some corruption in doctrines or manners, of the bible doctrines; some additions, or neglect of due observations of divine commands or institutions: and (excepting the name of God, and of Jesus Christ) what cause can be less justifiable, than a wilful breach of God's positive law; which, like himself, is immutable in its nature—For by the same rule that we may dispense with one precept, we may with all of them.

I see not but that the Sabbatarians have as fair ground for pleading justification in their separation from the other Baptists, as any sect extant can have. Let us see: The church of Rome claims immediate descent from

the apostles, and the succession in the ministry ; as also jurisdiction over all christian churches, to make laws for their faith, manners, &c.—and she brands dissenters from her, as hereticks ; and has often persecuted such with fire and sword, in order to reclaim them, or extirpate them from off the earth.—But this she could not have done, if it had not been for connecting church power with secular force, and assuming all power on earth. Martin Luther, being assisted by several powerful princes, separates from the Romish church ; and, in justification, protests against a number of her corruptions in doctrines, practice, power, &c.—But how many errors did he still bring out with him and retain ! A Protestant church and churches, are soon established ; and in many countries by *law* too : and one thing they appear generally to be agreed in ; viz.—to call the Romish church *Babylon*, the *Mother of harlots*, &c. But let us remember, that God does not always call things by the same name that man does. The Puritans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, separate on account of errors in Episcopal, or Church government ; and they, it seems, must have civil law to support their sentiments : and where that is the case, I know of no instance, wherein some degree of persecution has not been apparent.

But if Luther was gospelly or legally qualified to administer the ordinances, and to ordain elders, presbyters or bishops ; and those that dissented from him down to the Puritans in North America, were also legally authorised in the ministry, (of which I have no doubt) surely Mr. Williams was regularly ordained and baptized according to their order ; and was as capable to administer and ordain, as any other presbyter or bishop. His

being baptized by immersion, by a lay-man—or even if he had plunged *himself*, could not invalidate his infant baptism: and if he ever was qualified in a gospel or legal manner to baptize—surely he still retained such qualification, and had an undoubted right to baptize others by way of plunging or immersion;—as all agree that such was the mode practised by John on our Saviour, the apostles, &c. As he was banished by his brethren, not for any immorality, but merely for his religious sentiments, it could not affect his gospel authority, at least any more than Luther's; or than those that came off from him, were affected by the pope's anathemas &c.

So then, the Baptists can demonstrate as regular succession in the ministry, as to ordination and baptism, even from the apostles' days, as any Protestant church or sect whatever. And it may seem as strange, for an established Sabbatarian to get along with, or fellowship, externally, a first-day member of the other Baptist order, as it is for them to fellowship the Pedobaptist; or for any to fellowship those that hold the doctrine of Transubstantiation, &c. or fellowship the church of Rome in many of her errors.

Man cannot possess, enjoy, and practise truth, without being sincere; but sincerity does not make truth—as truth is a property, and constituting attribute of God.—Now if sincerity is to be the criterion of christians' external fellowship, where shall we put the period;—for charity may admit, at least, some of the Romish church, and even the Mahometans, to be as sincere, in their way as any other people.

Whether the alledged cause of separation, will be justifiable at the bar of God, is a matter that each sect

of christians, in my opinion, is responsible for—But as I purpose, if the Lord pleases, to say more on this subject in another part of this work, I shall pass over it at present.

Where the Sabbatarians in England came from, or who was their founder, or whether Mr. Stephen Mumford was an ordained minister of that order, when he first came over, are questions I am not authorised to solve with certainty. By way of summary, we find that the Baptists in America, separated from the Pcdobaptists, principally, on account of the candidates of baptism, and the mode of performing it. About the year 1644, they had formed a regular gospel church, and the Sabbatarians or Seventh-day Baptists separated from them, chiefly, on account of the Seventh-day Sabbath, and became a regular gospel church in the year 1671—first composed of seven members; viz. William Hixcox, their elder, and Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hubbard, Roger Baster, and three Sisters.

But let none despise the few in number, since we read in the good book, that “many go in at the wide gate and broad way which leadeth to destruction, when but few find the straight gate and narrow way to life.” It is somewhat difficult, for want of authentic records, to ascertain whether those seven members that entered into covenant, as above stated, all lived in Newport, (R. I.) at the time of said separation, or elsewhere. However, it is evident from the accounts of Mr. Backus and Mr. Hubbard, and from church memorandum, &c, that all the Seventh-day Baptists in America were considered as forming but one distinct church, until the year 1700. Their principal places of residence were Newport, and Westerly (now called), Hopkinton and New London.

Mr. Hubbard wrote to his friend in Jamaica, 1678, and says, "Our numbers here, are 20 ; at Westerly, 7 ; and at New London, 10."—*Backus*. It also appears, by Mr. Hubbard's Diary, that several members came off from Mr. Clarke's church, as also new converts joined them before 1678—And it is clear, both by the records of Newport church, and by that of Westerly, or Hopkinton, that several ordained ministers resided at those different places, that were considered as belonging to that one church both previous to, and even after the amicable dismission of those brethren at Westerly, from their Sabbatarian brethren at Newport, in the year 1708—And in our account of the several churches of this order, from the time of their organization to the present day, I shall consider Newport (R. I.) church as the oldest church of the Sabbatarian order, and as the third Baptist church in America.

NEWPORT (R. I.) CHURCH

WAS constituted or organized, by Mr. Hubbard's account in October, 1671. First number, seven members. Their first pastor was William Hiscox—He died, May 24th, 1704, in the 66th year of his age. Their second elder was William Gibson, from London. Whether Mr. Gibson received his ordination at London, or in America, is not ascertained.—He died, March 12, 1717, *Æt.* 79. Their next, or third elder, appears to be Joseph Crandall, who was ordained, May 8, 1715, and was a colleague with elder Gibson for two years, and then took the lead in said church.—He died, Sept. 13, 1737.

It appears, by the church records of Hopkinton, that Joseph Maxson was chosen to the office of an evangelist or travelling preacher, at Westerly, the 17th of September, 1732; and also, by a vote of the church at Newport. He was ordained at Newport, Oct. 8, 1732, to serve both churches—and died, Sept. 1748, in the 78th year of his age. And, it appears, that Thomas Hiscox was also ordained at Newport, by the joint vote of both churches, as a travelling preacher, at the same time elder Joseph Maxson was; and that elder Hiscox took the lead in the church at Westerly, 1750; and that elder Hiscox died, May 20, 1773, *Æt.* 77.

There was also, one or two elders, by the name of Peckham, who officiated as ministers in the Sabbatarian order, about this time: but I find no regular account of what church they belonged to, or when they died. One of them I well remember, when I was young.

Elder John Maxson was their next pastor, from the year 1754, until his death, March 2, 1778. I well remember elder Maxson, of this church, to be a man much esteemed by all, as a pious, godly man, and an able preacher.

Mr. Ebenezer David, who was converted in Providence College and took his first degree there 1772, was admitted a member of this church, Sept. 12, 1770, and called by the church, to the improvement of his gift, Sept. 19, 1773; and he was ordained, May 31, 1775. He being a young man, and our churches then supplied with preachers, he accepted the place of chaplain in the American army; where he was much esteemed—He died in the army, near Philadelphia, March 19, 1778, in the bloom of his days.

I was well acquainted with Mr. David; and may safely say, that few young men can be found, more promising than he was.

The church at Newport, about this time, experienced very heavy afflictions.—Their pastor's death—about the same time this youth died.—As the seat of war was there their deacon, Mr. Tanner, a man much esteemed, with Col. Bennet and a number of their principal members, left the Island to be more secure from the British, and moved into different parts of the country, for refuge.—None but those who have experienced the like, can sympathize with them.

William Bliss (with whom I was intimately acquainted, as also his brother Henry Bliss, who was afterwards a Judge in the state; both, in their younger years, were much inclined to Deism, but afterwards were substantial members of this church) was their next pastor. He was admitted a member of this church, June 21, 1764,

and called to the work of the ministry, Oct. 30, 1773, and was ordained an evangelist, at Hopkinton, Dec. 7, 1779, and was installed the pastor of this church, Dec. 25, 1780. He continued their pastor until his death, May 4, 1808, *Æt.* 81 years. He was a man of solid piety, judgment and information—had a large library of useful books, and made a good use of reading ; while he much esteemed the soul-reviving influence of the spirit, when corresponding with the written word. He carefully avoided enthusiastic and superstitious notions ; and as a friend, in private conversation, I scarce ever knew his equal. Mr. Backus, speaking of him, in his history, says “ he was so well esteemed by the Congregational ministers, that he was frequently called upon to supply their place in their absence.” And I may add, it was also the case with nearly all other denominations, as he was universally esteemed as a good preacher.

Arnold Bliss, son of the Elder, was admitted a member of this church, July 22, 1786. He settled near Bedford, (Mass.) and being zealous in the cause of religion, made improvement of his talents, and received ministerial ordination, Feb. 22, 1803, by his father, Elder Bliss, and Elder Abraham Coon, Hopkinton, and still continues his labours thereabouts. I expect he has a stated meeting on the Sabbath, but what numbers attend, is not ascertained, as I have no account of late from them.

Henry Burdick, was admitted a member of this church Jan. 30, 1802, and was called to the improvement of his gift, Jan. 11, 1807, and received ministerial ordination, Dec. 10, 1807, by Elders, William Bliss, Abram Coon, and Arnold Bliss. He still continues their minister—a pious, promising young man. Their present number,

according to their church records, sent me, dated Dec. 1, 1809, is 87.

I do not learn that this church has any church covenant, or articles of faith, or discipline, other than the scripture. As I know of no material difference in the doctrines of all the churches of this order, they will come more immediately under the head of our general observations on Tenets, &c.

Mr. Backus, speaking of this church in his History, observes: Mr. Thomas Ward, Esq. was a Baptist before he came out of Cromwell's army, and was early a member of this church; whose son, Richard Ward, was governor of the state (or then. colony) in the years 1741 and 1742; and that his son, Samuel Ward, was governor in the years 1762 and 1765, and a member in Congress in the years 1774, and 1775, where he died.—Both of them were members of this church.—[*vol. 3, page 234.*]

I was well acquainted with Gov. Samuel Ward and all his family; having boarded at his house while a boy, and went to school—and think Mr. Backus is correct.

This church, previous to the Revolutionary war, had a number of members, respectable for their talents, learning and abilities, and in eminent stations in the public affairs of state. But the war scattered them, and death has finally deprived her of them, for this church has not yet recovered the splendour it had before the war. Notwithstanding the long and fervent labours of Eld. Bliss, there has been but small additions, and no remarkable revivals, since the troubles of the war. The family of Eld. Bliss, like many others is much scattered, in different states of the Union. Perhaps he has been long sew-

ing the seed of the word, for others to reap the fruits of his labours.

And possibly, it may be owing to the spirit of infidelity, that has appeared to gain so much in America, generally since the war : as it may be remarked both from scripture and history, that those nations and cities, where the glorious display of God's divine Revelation ; and where eminent and numerous churches have been dedicated to the true God ; and where the gospel has had great success—are now very generally over-run with Paganism, Mahometanism, or other false worship. And if professed Christians, will neglect divine Revelation, and introduce their imaginations, or will worship in place of God's sacred truth ; may we not well expect, God will leave them to believe a lie——and so the dissolution of all things, or the end of the world, come when they are not looking for such things. Such seems to have been the case in the old world, before the deluge ; as also when the blessed Saviour first came : and when he comes again, shall he find true faith on the earth, all will have their gospel day ; and if they know not the things that belong to their peace, it may finally be hid from their eyes.

HOPKINTON (R. I.) CHURCH.

IT is to be observed, that this church and the church at Newport, were considered as but one church until the year 1708. I shall, therefore, from the most correct account I have obtained, consider them to be regularly constituted a distinct church, in sister relation with the Sabbatarian church at Newport, in said year 1708; and that elder John Maxson was their first minister, who was ordained, Sept. 20, 1708. He died, Dec. 17, 1720, in the 82d year of his age.

Elder Joseph Clarke, jr. was ordained, Oct. 21, 1712, and died June 5, 1719. Elder John Maxson, jr. was ordained, July 5, 1719, and died July, 1747, in the 81st year of his age. It appears, their numbers at this time were 172, and not under hands, 34. Laying on of hands, is practised generally, singing, in public worship; it is commonly, and almost constantly practised.

Joseph Maxson, (as was related under the Newport church) took the lead in this church, June 26, 1732.— Thomas Hiscox (who was baptized in 1706, and fifteenth year of his age) was chosen to the place of an evangelist or travelling minister, at Westerly, June 23, 1719.— And again the choice was renewed Sept. 17, 1732, and referred to the church at Newport, who voted his ordination, Oct. 1st, and he was there ordained, Oct. 8, 1732 (as related under Newport church) and took the lead in this church, Oct. 7, 1750. He died May 20, 1773, in the 77th year of his age. I remember him well. He was called a man of great abilities as a preacher; and very

universally esteemed as a godly, able minister of the gospel. I understand he sometimes made use of notes in preaching.

Deacon Thomas Clarke, was chosen assistant elder, Oct. 2, 1750, and died Nov. 20, 1767, aged 82 year. He was a very worthy, pious man.

Joshua Clarke (his son) was called by the church to the office of an elder, April 10, 1767, and accepted the call April 20 1768, and was ordained in May 1768. He died March 8, 1793, in the 77th year of his age. It is justly due to his memory, that in his earlier years, he sustained several important offices in the town, and was for a number of years a member of the Legislature of the state ; as also a member of the corporation of the college at Providence ; and while he was their minister, the church had large additions to their numbers, and were as united and orderly, as at any period of time.— He travelled many journeys, on church business, &c.

John Davis was called to the work of the ministry, Feb. 19, 1771, and ordained April 10, 1772. He afterwards removed to Bristol in the state of Connecticut, and became the pastor of the church there, as will be stated in its proper place.

Deacon John Burdick of this church, was chosen to the office of an elder, Dec. 22, 1772, and ordained, June 1774, and Sept 3, 1793 he was installed the pastor of this church, and continued his useful labours until his death, Feb. 28, 1802. I was very intimately acquainted with him ; and it may truly be said, he was a pious, fervent, faithful, eloquent and argumentative preacher of the gospel. This church had very great additions (I think over 200 members in one year) and prosperity under his ministry. As a citizen, he was universally res-

pected, and as a pastor to discipline the church. If he had any failing, it was in bearing or forbearing too much. He was incessant in his gospel labours, travelled much, and assisted in organizing several churches, has visited this place once, and several times at Petersburg in this state, and in the Jerseys, and elsewhere. But whether his flock has remunerated his services according to gospel requirement, is for them to judge. He died in the 70th year of his age. He preached much among other denominations, and I am ready to think, that if there was any woe against him, it must be because all spoke well of him.

I find by the church records of Hopkinton, that in June 25, 1746, one John Davis was ordained at Westerly by request of the brethren at Shrewsbury, East New-Jersey; and I have seen, and heard preach several times, elder Jacob Davis—I expect of this church since the late American war; and I understand, that church since I saw elder Jacob Davis, generally removed into the remote parts of the state of Virginia, where Eld. Davis died. But what has become of that church, I am not able to ascertain with precision: as I have no correct account of them, I shall not give them a place distinctly in this narrative.

Ebenezer David and William Bliss were ordained in this church, as stated under Newport church. William Coon was ordained at Hopkinton in this church May 20, 1783, and afterwards took charge of the church at Petersburg (or Berlin) as will be stated in its place.

Nathan Rogers was ordained at Hopkinton, by request of the brethren at New-London heck, an evangelist, March 12, 1786. He travelled much in several states of the Union, preached some time in the church of Piscat-

away, and in the year 1779 commenced membership with the church at Berlin, where he preached occasionally, and died June 30, 1806. He was a pious, exemplary man, and of irreproachable character.

Deacon Henry Clarke and deacon Asa Coon, were both ordained evangelists at Hopkinton, Sept. 3, 1793, of which we shall say more in the proper place.

Elder Abraham Coon, their present leader, was chosen by the church to the office of evangelist Aug. 17, 1798, accepted the call on the 24th, and was ordained on the 26th of the same month—The charge given by the Rev. William Bliss of Newport, and by vote of this church, took the lead, March 23, 1802. He is a preacher very universally admired for soundness of ideas, and for eloquence of delivery, as well as for force of argument. He preaches abundantly among different denominations, to their great satisfaction ; and his worth as a leader in discipline is manifest, in that he has uniformly been chosen moderator, in our general conferences for a number of years.

Matthew Stillman was ordained an associate with him in the work of the ministry June 3, 1804, and is much esteemed as an able, eloquent preacher of the gospel.

Their total number, as by the last correct return dated Sept 1809, was 765, of which 171 were absent in different states of the Union.—Their officers were, Abram Coon and Matthew Stillman, elders, Joseph Stillman, Daniel Babcock, Zaccheus Maxson, William Sullman, Wait Clarke and Alpheus Burdick, deacons, and Joseph Potter and Zaccheus Maxson, clerks : they have, also, two or three approved or licensed brethren, who preach occasionally.

It may not be improper to observe that in the first divisions of this state, the western part was incorporated into a town by the name of Westerly, which then comprehended the towns of Hopkinton, Charlestown, &c. that the Sabbatarians of this church live within the bounds of those towns, generally, and towns adjacent; but in Hopkinton is their main residence. There are in this town three meeting-houses, (one of them the largest of this denomination) where they meet statedly for public worship; and their records and discipline is kept at two of them. Query—In case they could be mutually agreed, would it not be far more convenient, for the pastoral care and for discipline, for them to become two distinct churches in sister relation? But such has been the affection of the people, together with the modesty, charity and prudence of their leaders, that they have never consented to a division; and it remarkable, that for more than one hundred years, there has never been any material schism in this church. About sixty years ago, there was some appearance of a schism; when one Joseph Davis was the means of drawing off some few members, and formed a church that goes by the names of Separates, Newlights, free or open Communicants, or Catholic Baptists, &c.—and it might be well for all to see if in such conduct, enthusiasm, superstition, fanaticism, or a zeal, not according to knowledge, had influence, rather than solid judgment and the word of God.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned schism, and the numerous amicable dismissions from this church to form others, the numbers of this church is yet the most numerous of any church, I believe, on this continent; and in the bosom of this church, have been raised ma-

ny respectable characters: and almost all the first preachers of the northern churches of this sect, had their rise and ordination in this church, as will be seen, and the genius and abilities of several of their preachers, have evidently been such, that could they have had the privilege of a liberal education, no doubt would have been some of the brightest luminaries in the christian world.

There are, also, now in this church, a number of distinguishable characters that fill eminent offices in the state.—Their deacon, Daniel Babcock, has been, for the last three years, chosen an assistant with the governor of the state, in the upper house of their Legislature;—as also other members of this community, often sit in the Legislature of the state, as well as fill offices of trust in the militia, town, &c. Some have shown their genius by being some of the most expert and forward workmen in the machinery of our Manufactories, and some have obtained patents from Congress, for their inventions, &c.

As a community, if they are not noted for scientific literature, they may be for useful arts, and for steady habits of industry, husbandry, and orderly citizens. And all will do well to remember, that perseverance and improvement are necessary: as also subjection to order, and to God's government, if we would be happy here in a state of society, or hereafter meet the divine approbation: Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.

PISCATAWAY CHURCH.

THE third (or rather the second distinct) Sabbatarian church in America, was formed at Piscataway, Middlesex county, state of New-Jersey, by the following circumstance :

In the year of our Lord 1700 or 1701, Edmund Dunham, a leader in the first-day Baptist church of that place, as I think, admonished Hezekiah Bonham for doing servile labour on the first day of the week. Mr. Bonham requested Mr. Dunham, to prove from scripture, that the first day of the week was holy, by divine institution. This set Mr. Dunham on examining the point ; the consequence was, his rejecting the first day of the week, and embracing the seventh day of the week as the holy Sabbath, and receiving the fourth commandment as moral and unchangeable.

In a short time seventeen sided with Mr. Dunham ;—and at length on the 19th day of August 1705, they chose Edmond Dunham to be their elder and overseer, according to the will of God, and sent him to Westerly (R. I.) to be ordained by prayer and laying on of hands of their elder, William Gibson, which was done the 8th day of Sept. 1705. On the 29th day of December, 1706, they chose Benjamin Martin to be their deacon ; who was ordained by prayer and laying on of hands of their elder, Edmond Dunham.

In April 1707, they introduced and signed a special church covenant, or articles of faith, discipline, &c. (but

as those articles are not materially different from others of this sect, and we may consider them under our general remarks, shall wave them for the present) signed by about twenty persons. Ruling elders, and christian rites, are also admitted into this church. Eld. Dunham continued their leader until his death, March 7, 1734, in the 73d year of his age.

Mr. Dunham was an Englishman, and one of the first settlers in Piscataway, as his name is on the town record date 1681, he is well spoken of, and is considered as the father of this church, which included all the seventh-day Baptists in this state for thirty years—taken from their church records, sent me. It is thought to be too voluminous for the limits of this book to mention all the deacons' names, and several other matters contained in their account.

They met for public worship in private houses, until the year 1736; then they built a meeting house on a lot of one acre of land, the donation of Jonathan Fitz Randolph.

In 1737, a number of the members of this church were amicably dismissed to form a church in sister relation, at Cohansey, as will be noticed. Other members since, from time to time, have been dismissed, and removed into the interior of our western country, and formed churches there.

Jonathan Dunham, son of the Rev. Edmond Dunham, succeeded his father in the ministry. He was first chosen and ordained a deacon, Nov. 1734, and preached as a licentiate for some years; and was ordained pastor of this church in 1745. He continued their pastor until March 11, 1777, when he died of the small pox, in the 86th year of his age—having sustained a good character.

About 1770, Jonathan Jarman came to this church, a licentiate from Cohansey church; and in 1772, he was ordained an assistant to elder Jonathan Dunham; but he went from this place, in 1776, to French Creek in the state of Pennsylvania.

This church, after the death of Elder Dunham, was a number of years without a pastor; but was visited occasionally by preachers, and some of the first-day Baptists preached stately with them once in two weeks, for several years. This church, also, had sore troubles about this time, by being near the seat of war, and in the vicinity of the ravages of the British army.

But, about the 1st of June, 1786, elder Nathan Rogers came here from New-London, and in the course of that summer and autumn, there was a remarkable revival in religion in those parts, and sixty members were added to their church under his ministry. In October of this year, elders William Bliss and John Burdick, from the state of Rhodeisland, visited this church; when elder Elisha Gillet was ordained an evangelist preacher, by them and said Eld. Rogers.

On Nov. 4, 1787, elder Nathan Rogers brought a letter of dismission and commendation from the Sabbatarian church at New-London, (Connecticut) and gave himself, a member of this church, and took the oversight thereof.

In January, 1788, this church and society, became incorporated a body politic, according to the law of the state, and chose their trustees.

In the year 1789, said Eld. Gillet moved to Oyster-Pond on Long-Island; and in 1791, he with others were organized into a church in sister relation, but he soon proceeded to receive in, first-day members which divi-

ded his church—and I believe that church is now nearly extinct.

In 1795 this church received elder Henry M'Lafferty as a preacher, on equal footing with Eld. Rogers : and in June 1797 Eld. Rogers obtained a letter of commendation, to travel and join any church of the same faith and order of this church, or to keep his standing. He finally died at Petersburg, as is stated under Hopkinton church.

In 1802 the society built a new meeting-house on the lot where the old one stood, (where I met with our last general Conference) and it is a neat, well-finished meeting-house, with a gallery, &c.

Elder M'Lafferty continues their minister, and is quite an entertaining preacher. About thirty-five members have been added under his ministry. Gideon Wooden is licentiated to preach with him, and is a promising young man of irreproachable character.

The times appointed to administer the Lord's supper, is quarterly. The sixth day before communion, is set apart as a day of fasting and prayer. The first day in every month is a church conference, to adjust the affairs of the church ; where all questions requiring a vote, are decided by a majority ; excepting choosing church officers, which is done by casting lots, in case all the church are not agreed in one. They are in the practice of having ruling elders and assistant deacons.

Their church officers, as stated in their return dated 1809, stand thus :—

HENRY M-LAFFERTY, Elder and Pastor,	
GIDEON WOODEN, Licentiate.	
DAVID DUNN,	} Deacons.
LEWIS TITSWORTH, &	
PHINEHAS DUNN,	

LEWIS TITSWORTH, & } Ruling Elders.
JONATHAN MARTIN, }

JOEL DUNN, Clerk. Total Numbers, 65.

The situation of this community, is truly pleasant—An excellent soil, of level, fertile land, in a high state of cultivation; about thirty miles from the city of N. York. As a people, they appear to be much more wealthy than their northern brethren. This church has produced several eminent characters, that have filled respectable stations in the state—and still has a number of worthy and respectable members; with whom I have had some acquaintance. They have been the most liberal patrons of THIS WORK, of any church in the Union, according to their numbers: And, with the divine blessing and their conformity to union and order, they may be a long and lasting blessing in society, and a faithful witness to the truth of the Lord's Sabbath, as well as a light of the world, and as the salt of the earth. But as opposition to God's government, has been the source of all the evils in this world; so the want of union, concord and charity, as well as want of order, and subjection to government, has proven the overthrow of many eminent churches.

COHANSEY CHURCH.

THIS church, it appears, by their information or church records sent to me, was constituted March 27th 1737, by about 20 members ; part of which had removed from Piscataway church. Previous to their forming a Sabbatarian church here, and as early as 1695 elder Jonathan Davis (I do not learn from what church) moved from Long-Island, (N. Y) into the Jersey state, near to Trenton. and preached thereabouts to the day of his death, in 1750 ; but it is not stated that any church gathered near Trenton.

Elder Davis occasionally visited Cohansey, and his brother's sons moved to Cohansey ; one of them, Jonathan Davis by name, was a preacher, and a principal agent in gathering this church, and became their first settled minister. He was called to the ministry in the year 1732. and ordained their pastor Nov. 26, 1738, and continued to take the care of said church, until his death, Feb 2, 1769, in the 60th year of his age.

Mr. Caleb Ayers had given them a deed of one acre of land, dated March, 1738, situated in the township of Hopewell, in Cumberland county, near the village of Shiloh, in said state. On this lot is their meeting-house and burial ground, where their elders have been buried, and handsome tombs erected to their memory.

His successor in the ministry, was Jonathan Davis, not of the other's family, but of Welsh extraction. He was born at Newark in the state of Delaware, July 7th,

1734. He was called to the work of the ministry, and ordained in this church Nov. 13, 1768, and took the oversight of this church, at the decease of the other, and continued in his office as their pastor, much esteemed by the church, until his death, July 23, 1785, *Æt.* 52. I have heard him preach at Hopkinton, and he was accounted a very able preacher, of a solemn deportment, and unblemished character.

It appears that elder Jonathan Jerman, who was ordained at Piscataway, as stated under Piscataway church, preached here some time, and then moved to Cape May, where he died in January, 1808, and was brought to this place for interment.

Deacon Philip Ayars, also, preached in this church about the time said Jarman died, and was considered a leader in this church, and an administrator of baptism. He died in December, 1789.

Elder Nathan Ayars was born at Cohansey, and was ordained in this church, Nov. 13, 1786. He has been an administrator in this church ever since, and is esteemed a pious, good man. I heard him preach, last October, at Piscataway.

In the year 1790, Jan. 8th, this church was incorporated as a body politic, according to the law of the state.

John Davis, youngest son of the late elder Jonathan Davis, was born in this place. He was called by this church, to the work of the ministry, and was ordained, Sept. 14, 1807. He is esteemed as a pious, promising young man; and is their principal administrator at present. I also heard him preach, last October, likewise at Hopkinton in the year 1808.

There have been several revivals in this church: the principal one took place in 1807 & 1808, when about 70

persons were added to this church. There are several other members of this church, who are liberated to exhort, &c. not yet ordained.

The covenant articles of this church appear the same as the Piscataway church articles; and their method of discipline much the same. This church still practise laying on of hands, and admit of washing feet, &c.

Their church officers, and numbers, in October, 1810, stand thus :—

Elder JOHN DAVIS, Teacher,

Elder NATHAN AYARS, Evangelist.

JOSHUA AYARS,

CALEB SHEPHERD, & } Ruling Elders.

EVAN DAVIS,

SAMUEL DAVIS,

LEVI HALL, & } Deacons.

JEDEDIAH DAVIS,

JACOB WEST, Clerk. Total Number, 170.

I learn they are situated in a fertile part of the state, and have many wealthy and respectable members, for talents and abilities, in church and state.

In case religious societies have power, and those in office or power, only exercise that power agreeable to divine appointment, and those out of power, know their station, and subject themselves to order,—all may be happy in their stations, in cultivating benevolence, peace and harmony: Whereas, opposite conduct, produces opposite effects.

BURLINGTON (Con.) CHURCH

WAS constituted a distinct church, in fellowship with the other Sabbatarian Bapists churches, on the 18th day of September, 1780, by the Rev. John Burdick and deacon Elisba Stillman, of Rhode-Island. This place was then called Farmington West Britain. Their first number was 19.

Elder John Davis, who was ordained at Hopkinton (as has been stated) March 10, 1771, had settled with them at this place, and took the lead in the church. Benjamin West was their deacon, and Elisha Covy, was their clerk.

This church had sore difficulties for a number of years; and it appears, few or no additions for ten years. Deacon West left them—and on the 29th of September 1783, Amos Burdick was ordained a deacon, by the Rev. John Burdick and deacon Joseph Stillman, of Rhode-Island. On the 29th of May 1785, elder John Davis was regularly installed their pastor; and in the course of the next year, they had a remarkable revival, and nineteen souls added to their numbers. Such, seems to be the blessing of God, on their subjecting to an orderly method of church government.

On the 29th of August, 1792, elder John Davis departed this life, in the 69th year of his age—after a long illness, which he bore with much patience and resignation to the divine will.

I was well acquainted with Elder Davis.—He was a

very pleasant man, a tender-hearted and affectionate preacher, of sound doctrine—and unblemished character.

After the death of Elder Davis, deacon Amos Burdick preached the word among them, until his death, March 25, 1803, aged 64 years. There was a considerable revival, and nine were added to the church under his ministry. He was a pious, well-disposed man, and sustained a good character, as a citizen, and as a preacher of the gospel.

Amos Stillman had lived in this vicinity, for some time previous to deacon Burdick's death, and was an approved preacher of the gospel, and preached with deacon Burdick statedly for some time. After deacon Burdick's decease, he took the lead in worship; and on January 27, 1805, he was ordained as an evangelist, by elder Abram Coon and Matthew Stillman of Rhode-Island.

Ethan Stillman was also ordained a deacon among them, Sept. 7, 1806.

In the fall of 1806, there was a revival in religion, great love, and union in this church—and 16 were added to their numbers.

Elder Amos Stillman, (with whom I was intimately acquainted, from his youth) considering his education, and the emarrassments of his worldly concerns, was quite an able preacher of the gospel, of sound doctrines, bright ideas, &c. He was very universally esteemed as a preacher, at home and abroad. In the fall of the year 1807, he went to our general Conference at Cohansey (N. J.) where he presided in Conference, and preached to great satisfaction. But, on his return home, he took the yellow-fever, of which he died Oct. 7, 1807, in the

45th year of his age—lamented by all his acquaintance ; and greatly to the loss of this church, as they have had no stated preaching, weekly, among them since his decease.

Their number, as stated in their return to general Conference 1809, was 45.

Deacon Ethan Stillman, and their clerk, Elisha Covy, are still living : and, I learn, the late deacon Burdick has left a son, a member of this church, who has made some public attempts to preach or exhort, to general satisfaction—And they have some other respectable members yet among them. But why they remain without a stated preacher, so long, is a question that might seriously concern them ; and which is for them to answer.

As man is formed for society, and as his Maker has instituted social, public worship, as a means to cement and perpetuate society, as well as to serve to declare the glory of God on earth ; and has given the Sabbath, and commanded the people to convene on that day as an holy convocation, [see Levit. xxiii. 3.]—so it is evident, that where people neglect the attendance of public worship, society declines—the youth contract vain habits—break their sabbath, &c.—and in an ordinary way, society becomes extinct, with regard to religion, or religious worship. Therefore, parents should well consider their accountability to God, and the consequences of not having a meeting for their families to go to ; and not let prejudices or party animosities, or non-essential ideas, or an illiberal heart or practice, to prevent so useful and comfortable a practice.

Surely, God is ready to bless his people, if they perform their duty ;—but we are not to expect miracles in the ordinary government of Divine Providence.—And as God gives gifts to men ; so, no doubt, there may be preachers to supply all vacancies, if there is sufficient encouragement for their support. There is a consistency, propriety, and order, in the system of religion, or it will do mankind no real good.

BERLIN CHURCH.

THE situation of this church, is in the north-easterly parts of the state of New-York, adjoining Massachusetts, at a place first called Little Hoosack in the hill country. The members of this church, principally reside in the towns of Petersburg, Berlin, and Stephentown. They have a decent meeting-house in Berlin, where their discipline is held; and a small but well-finished meeting-house in Stephentown, where a stated meeting is held on the Sabbath.

Previous to the American Revolution, a number of the members of the church or churches, of the Sabbatarians in Rhode-Island, had removed here, and became some of the first settlers of this part of the state; among whom were the families of the Greenmans, Crandalls, Greens, Coons, Randalls, &c.

About the year 1780, elder John Burdick, with William Coon, from Hopkinton, visited them, and arranged them into a church. William Coon was an approved preacher about this time, and was regularly ordained at Hopkinton, May 20th 1783, and took the lead in said church (their then numbers about 18) Aug. 7, 1783—and was so blest in his labours that, during his ministry, there was added to this church near 167 members. He died, of a cancer on his neck, Jan. 18, 1801, in the 59th year of his age.

I was acquainted with Elder Coon from my youth, being born in the neighbourhood with him. He was an a-

ble, impressive, argumentative preacher of the gospel as, perhaps, this denomination ever had. He was much called to preach among other sects, and very universally approved of—As a leader in discipline he has few equals—and in him this church lost a faithful and much esteemed leader. In his last, and extreme illness, he bore it with the utmost fortitude and patience, and resignation to the Divine will; and died entirely composed in his mind, and universally lamented.

Mr. Van Rensselaer, the late deputy governor of this state, who owned the patent where Elder Coon lived, set so much by his worth, as to give him a clear deed of the farm where he lived; as also, considerable towards building their meeting-house.

His successor in the ministry, was his nephew, Asa Coon, ordained at Hopkinton (as has been stated) Sept. 3, 1793, and at the request of this church, removed here in June 1801, and took the lead in this church July 3, 1801.—But God, who is wise in council, saw fit to cut his work short—as he died, of a fever, Oct. 22, 1801, in the 45th year of his age, much lamented by all his acquaintance—and especially by me, who was his intimate associate both in youth and in the ministry. He was universally esteemed as a faithful, able, eloquent preacher of the gospel, and of correct ideas, as also of an unblemished character, as a good citizen.

William Satterlee joined this church in the year 1799, and received ordination as an evangelist elder Jan. 13th 1805, by the Rev. Abram Coon and Eld. Matthew Stillman, in the 37th year of his age, and immediately took the lead in this church.

There were some members joined this church after Elder Coon's death, previous to Elder Satterlee's taking

the lead: But since his ministry (as by their records) there have been added to this church, 160 members.— Such has been the blessing of God on the labours of this man, who continues their present leader. He is also esteemed an able, eloquent preacher of the gospel—of sound doctrines and morals, and well accepted by all denominations. And, altho' he has an impediment in his speech, and has had but an ordinary education, yet few men can demonstrate the main points of the christian religion, with equal clearness and impression.

Their present number, as by their statement sent me the present month, is 335. Their officers are,

Elder WILLIAM SATTERLEE, Minister,

JOHN GREEN,

JABEZ BURDICK, & } Deacons.

JAMES GREENMAN }

JOHN WHITFORD, Clerk.

Deacon Greenman preaches occasionally. Deacon Green has been a member in this state legislature. They have other members who have filled various offices in their towns, counties, &c. They have a number of respectable characters now in this church.

I understand this church have covenant articles relative to discipline; but no articles of faith other than the bible.

WATERFORD CHURCH.

THE Sabbatarian church at Waterford (formerly called New-London Neck) in Connecticut, was formed principally by removals from Hopkinton, together with several families of the Rogerses, residents of this place, who sent request to their brethren at Hopkinton, June 28th, 1784, to be organized a church in sister relation.

Their request being granted in October of the same year, they called a meeting Nov. 11, 1784, and became a church, composed of about 16 members ; and Davis Rogers, one of them, was chosen for their elder, and was ordained by the Rev. Joshua Clarke and Eld. John Burdick, of Hopkinton, November 6, 1785, and took the charge of this church. William Wescot, a worthy member, was ordained a deacon, at the same time.

Jabez Beebe, jr. a worthy and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, in the ministry, was also ordained an evangelist, Feb. 14, 1796—And Ephraim Rogers, a pious and exemplary member, was ordained a deacon, the same time.

Elder Davis Rogers, contemplating a removal into the state of New-York, requested a dismissal from the pastoral services of this church, but still to retain his membership : and Elder Jabez Beebe, with the approbation of the church, received the pastoral charge—delivered unto him by elder Davis Rogers, May 19, 1804—and remains their pastor, and is esteemed by many, to be a very able preacher of the gospel.

Elder Rogers, is now living in the County of Chenango, (N. Y.) where there is a number of this order, and a stated meeting kept up. He, also, is much esteemed as a pious, able preacher.

I do not learn that this church has any covenant articles other than the bible.

Their present number is stated to be 46—all native citizens of the United States.

BROOKFIELD CHURCH.

THIS church was constituted in the year 1797. Several of the members of the church at Hopkinton, having previously purchased lands of this state, in the 19th township of the Governor's Purchase, so called, began settlements thereon, as early as 1791.

In May, 1795, Henry Clarke, who was one of said purchasers, removed his family to his lot, where he now lives.—All was a wilderness, in its native state, when first purchased at 50 cents per acre.—He had received ordination as an evangelist, at Hopkinton, as stated, in the year 1793, by the Rev. William Bliss, John Burdick, and William Coon. On his moving here, by the blessing of God, and the consent of the people, he attended a stated meeting, on the Seventh day, with his brethren; and often among other denominations—where he met with kind reception, and handsome offers.

In July 1797, those Sabbatarian members, having received the advice and approbation of the churches to which they belonged, entered into a solemn covenant with God and each other, to keep the Commandments of God and the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, by maintaining the public worship of God, and watching over each other for mutual good, and bearing burdens, &c. as may be seen by their covenant articles of this date on record.

They also sent request to Hopkinton church, Berlin church, &c. for assistance of their elders, to organize

them a distinct church, in sister relation and fellowship with those other Sabbatarian churches. Accordingly they met at the school house in said Brookfield, on the 3d day of October, 1797—And as the constituting of this church, was transacted under the superintendence of that worthy and eminent servant of the Lord, elder John Burdick, I think proper to insert, substantially, the whole proceedings as is on our church records.—

Present at said meeting, Rev. John Burdick pastor, and Asa Coon evangelist, from the church at Hopkinton, (R. I.) and deacon William Greenman, and brother Nathan Greenman, from the church at Berlin, (N. Y.) together with 13 brethren and 7 sisters, of this place ; who chose elder Henry Clarke and brother Joshua Maxson to represent this society in council with said elders and brethren. They then appointed elder John Burdick moderator, and Nathan Greenman clerk. And after examining the covenant of said brethren and sisters in this place, and finding them mutually agreed in faith and gospel order—

WE, the representatives from the churches to which we severally belong, in council with our said brethren aforesaid, Do give unto them the right hand of fellowship ; acknowledging them to be a distinct gospel church, in fellowship with us, and the churches in our fellowship—duly qualified to act for themselves, in choosing their necessary officers for carrying on gospel administration, and gospel discipline.

And after taking the voice of said church individually, they all made choice of Henry Clarke, to be their pastor, and William Davis to be their deacon. Then adjourned to the 10th inst. Met according to adjournment Oct. 10, 1797, and after converse on the subject of El-

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der Clarke's call to the pastoral office. His answer is, After weighing in his mind the various circumstances manifest in God's Providence, and in the church, together with the feelings of his own mind, he accepts their call, and consents to receive the pastoral charge, or watch-care of this church. Reserving to the liberty of his own mind, to attend to the calls of funerals, and occasional visits to other churches; and to relinquish his said charge, in case he should deem it consistent with the word of God, and the dictates of his own mind, and that without censure.

Which was conceded to by the church.

The deacon also accepted their call to him as their deacon.

They appointed first-day, the 16th inst. for the instalment of said pastor. Met agreeable to appointment, (a large concourse of people) when elder Asa Coon preached the sermon, and elder John Burdick made the ordination prayer; and with deacon William Greenman and Joshua Maxson laid on hands, and gave the charge in writing, and elder Coon gave the right hand of fellowship, &c. The instalment, charge, &c. as following;

WHEREAS, it hath pleased God to move upon the hearts of the people of this church to call upon this our beloved and reverend Brother to take upon him the pastoral office, as their rightful elder and overseer; and him to accept their call; and at their request and desire, and in their name and behalf, we do set apart this our said Brother hereby, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Do appoint and ordain this our said Brother, to be your pastor and elder; duly authorizing you to exercise every branch of said office—by prayer and laying on of hands.—Dear Brother and Elder, as it hath pleased God

to move upon the hearts of this church, to call upon you to take the pastoral office and charge over them, and you to accept their call, and take upon you the watch and care of this people. And as you have for several years been set apart to the sacred work of the ministry, as an evangelist, whereby you have been cloathed with authority as a minister of Christ, to administer the ordinances of the gospel, holy baptism and laying on of hands on believing and professing penitents, and to administer the Lord's Supper when called thereto among those of the same faith and order of the gospel, and to consummate marriage, when requested, according to to law—as a servant of God, and the people, and an elder of Christ's church, at the desire and request of this church, and in their name—and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—I commit the pastoral care and charge of this flock unto thee: charging thee before God, the holy angels, and this assembly, first to take heed to thyself—and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made thee overseer—to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood—you are to preach the word of God to them, and administer the ordinances of the gospel among them. Secondly, you are to keep up holy discipline in the church, according to the rule of Christ in his word, and to do all things without partiality—to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine.—With gospel authority, you are to feed them with knowledge and understanding, and study to shew thyself approved unto God—a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God to them—and to watch for their souls, as one that must give an account—you are to

visit your flock occasionally, to know their state, and warn the unruly, and comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak, and be patient towards all—and see that none render evil for evil—and to be an example to the flock in word, in charity, in faith and purity—watch thou in all things, make full proof of thy ministry—Be thou faithful until death, and God will give thee a crown of life—Which may he grant you for Christ's sake. AMEN.

Beloved and reverend Brother, you having been called and chosen by this church, to be their pastor and elder—I do, in the name and behalf of this church, at their desire as representative from the sister church to which we belong, give unto thee the right hand of fellowship, hereby acknowledging you to be their rightful and lawful elder, and pastor, lawfully authorized to exercise every branch of your sacred office, as thou mayest be called thereunto—And may the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding in all things to do his will, working in you, that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory in all the churches forever.—AMEN.

Thus this church was organized in October, 1797, of about 25 members, and they had considerable additions to their numbers soon after; and in the year 1800 they were incorporated according to law; and have since built a decent meeting-house, in said town, well finished off, on a good large lot of land purchased by said church and society. Their lots and buildings cost near 3000 dollars.

They have had several revivals, in which there have been added to this church about 110 new converts, which

together with some from other churches, make their present numbers 160—some of which are a distance off in the newer settlements of this state, &c.

There is in this community, sundry persons of respectable standing in public concerns.

The ordinary affairs of the discipline in the church, is conducted by a church council, which acts in the name and behalf the church, and is composed of the elder, deacons and clerk, for the time being, and of six reputable male members to be annually chosen for that purpose, by the church at large, in their annual church-meeting. But any member has liberty to attend the meetings of the council, and to debate and vote, (if a male) on any question that concerns the church, final excommunication of any member, as also, rules for the church is only transacted by the church at large, in their annual church-meetings.

Their method of supporting their minister, is by a permanent subscription; in which each member of church or society, signs for that purpose, what he is willing to pay annually, so long as he is a member and privileged with the labours of the minister—only, they have a right to alter the sum in the month of January, yearly, if they choose.

The expences of the communion table, and church messengers, is made out by the church at their annual church-meeting. The other expences of the church and society, are paid by way of tax, assessed by three judicious members; and if any refuse to pay, they forfeit their membership in said society.

Their present officers are, HENRY CLARKE, pastor—JOSHUA MAXSON and PHINEHAS BURDICK, deacons--

ABEL BURDICK, clerk—CHARLES BABCOCK, WM. BASSET, AUGUSTUS KINYON, SILAS SPENCER, JAMES C. BURDICK, and SAMUEL BABCOCK, jr. church's council—ETHAN CLARKE, ABEL BURDICK, BENJAMIN COLEGROVE, JOSEPH CLARKE, SAUNDERS LANGWORTHY, and WILLIAM WHITFORD, trustees—SAUNDERS LANGWORTHY, ABEL BURDICK, and WM. WHITFORD, assessors.

DERUYTER (N. Y.) CHURCH.

A number of the Sabbatarian brethren and sisters that had removed from the state of Rhode-Island, and from Berlin, state of New-York, and settled at Deruyter, Cazenovia, &c. and making application to the Sabbatarian general Conference, held at Berlin in Sept. 1806, for assistance to organize them a sister church, and to ordain David Davis an elder.

Accordingly Conference appointed Elder Henry Clarke and William Satterly, together with two deacons and some other brethren, to visit them, and if thought expedient, to grant their request.

Said elders and brethren met at said Deruyter with those brethren there on the 26th day of Sept. 1806—and finding them mutually agreed, proceeded to constitute them a distinct church, in sister relation with the other churches of the Sabbatarian order—their numbers male and female then being 23—who chose David Davis to be ordained as an evangelist, and to preach to them, or to have the lead among them.—Which was accordingly done at the same time.

Elder David Davis is also esteemed a man of irreproachable character, and resides among them now. By the last correct return, their number was 35.

I expect this church have articles of covenant, relative to their meetings, &c. but the bible is their standard of faith.

They are situated in a good country, and have some prospect of being a numerous church, if God shall bless them, and they faithfully strive to serve God, and keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

VIRGINIA CHURCHES.

AT the Sabbatarian general Conference, held at Hopkinton (R. I.) Sept. 1808, there were letters, sent by elder John Davis, from two churches in that quarter; one from Lost Creek, Virginia, then composed of 23 members, and the other in Salem, Virginia, composed of 38 members, and said Davis had the oversight of both of said churches. Their deacon was Abel Bond, and their clerk was Moses Huffman.

The distance of those churches is so great (although they were admitted into the Sabbatarian Conference) that I have had no correct information from them since. And although I saw elder John Davis, and heard him preach (who is esteemed by many as an able, entertaining preacher) yet as I had then no knowledge of my writing this History, I took no memorandum of the date of their organization, or from what people they originated. I rather conclude they formerly went from the state of New Jersey. There was a letter from them at our last Conference, in Oct. 1810. But as I took no minutes from it then, and the Conference Minutes have not got to me yet, I must omit giving further account of them.

There is a number of societies or sections of churches, of this order, in several other places, as a church on the West Fork of the Monongahela river, in the state of Virginia, who also sent a letter to be admitted into the Sabbatarian general Conference. But as they ad-

mitted communion with first-day members, they were not admitted into Conference.

I learn there is a society of this sect, at Red Stone, in Virginia. And I have heard something of one or two other societies of this order in our South-Western Territories, but am not able to give correct information about them.

There is a stated meeting kept up among a number of this order, living in the vicinity of Rome, or Verona, in the state of New-York ; and also at the town of Rodman, in the county of Jefferson : besides a number of smaller branches, and scattering members, in different parts of this state, and other states of the Union.

RECAPITULATION.

BY recapitulating the numbers that observe the seventh day of the week as the sabbath of the Lord our God, we find thus, as to total numbers ; viz.—

	MEMBERS.
The Church of Newport, R. I.	- - 87
The Church of Hopkinton, R. I.	- - 765
The Church of Piscataway, N. J.	- - 65
The Church of Cohansey, N. J.	- - 170
The Church of Burlington, Con.	- - 45
The Church of Berlin, N. Y.	- - 335
The Church of Waterford, Con.	- - 46
The Church of Brookfield, N. Y.	- - 160
The Church of Deruyter, N. Y.	- - 35
The Church of Lost Creek, Va.	- - 23
The Church of Salem, Va.	- - 38
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Sum total in Fellowship	- - 1769

Add to this, the families of members and other respectable families that are members of society, or that observe that day, and attend that meeting, as I conclude a fair computation would be four to one of the professors,—which will make - - - - - 7076

And as there is in other churches that hold to open communion, and some that are more close in their com-

munion, a large number of souls that observe the seventh day of the week as the sabbath of the Lord, I should think, from my best information, that those with their families, &c. upon a modest calculation, will amount to 6155 within the bounds of the United States; which will make the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND SOULS, that observe the seventh-day sabbath, within the limits of the United States of America—A number too respectable to be despised by their fellow-citizens, or to be oppressed or persecuted for their conscience sake, by human laws.

As, by close investigation, it will be found, that more useful citizens, as to support of government, defenders of our nation, and subjection to the laws (where those laws are not in opposition to the laws of God) as also, peaceable and industrious, as well as enterprising—cannot be found among any other sect of christians or citizens, according to their numbers; as will fully appear by our General Observations.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AS TO TENETS AND MORALS.

AS this denomination universally hold the bible to contain God's holy will revealed to man, wherein are exhibited the objects of faith, and the rules of life; and that all doctrines of men, which are repugnant to that sacred oracle of perfect and divine truth, is to be tried by that sacred standard, and carefully avoided; and as the bible is explicit, to direct in every station of life, the duty we owe to God, ourselves and our fellow-mortals—so they generally esteem, any prescriptions of man, in those latter ages of the world, as to rules of faith and morals, not only useless, but nearly presumptuous.

And notwithstanding they are harmoniously agreed in the important, fundamental, and essential points, of the Christian Religion; yet as to smaller matters, and mere circumstantial points, there may be a great variety of sentiments.—Hence it is evident, that nearly all their leaders and preachers, have some tenet, on some abstruse or doubtful point of divinity, peculiar to themselves.

And as to modern popular doctrines, they generally, are between the Calvinist and Armenian; as few are willing to own that God governs by absolute fate, or that he has ordained whatsoever comes to pass, by an immutable decree—or that he has elected a certain few to eternal felicity, and the rest of mankind he has reprobated, and consigned to eternal woe, without any regard to

man's actions—So, on the other hand, I know of none that hold, man can merit his own salvation, at the hand of God, by his works—But rather, as a general idea, they hold with the prophet Ezekiel, that God delighteth not in the death of him that dieth, (or the wicked) but that they turn and live : or with St. Paul, that God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, &c.—In other words, that God deals with his creature, man, as a rational being, that God has endowed them with a degree of moral agency by which they are accountable, as accountability is lost where agency is denied, and that God has made provision in the gift of his Son, for their happiness ; and gives them the freedom of volition and choice ; and that those who attend to God's appointed ways, of faith and submission to his will or laws, and continue therein faithful until death, God will give such a crown of life. Whereas, the impenitent, unbelieving, immoral and rebellious, must take their part in everlasting misery ; and that God will judge all men according to their works—to be more particular.

I conclude they all believe in one God, the Father and Maker of all things, sin excepted, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and also in the Holy Ghost, as the operative power or spirit of God. But there are few if any, of this denomination, as I conceive, who believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three absolute distinct persons, coequal, coessential, and coeternal Gods, and yet but one God ; as such an idea would be in the face of scripture, and repugnant to right reason.

Therefore, there is a variety of sentiments in this

sect, in explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, so called: as also that of Original Sin—Both which, perhaps, are inexplicable by finite mortals; as also the foreknowledge of God—such things being reserved as secret, belonging to God: And altho' many may attempt to explain them, will still be obscure.

They all, also, hold the moral, or royal, law of God, or the Ten Precepts given to Moses by God at Mount Sinai, to be, like his own character, immutable; or that as God is perfect, his law is perfect; and the only rule of moral actions for man to live by, or the only criterion to define sin and right, and that mankind have gone out of God's way, and merited God's displeasure, or are all poor lost sinners, that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in his sight: that it is needful for man, in order for his happiness, to have a due sense of the purity of God's law, and their lost situation set home on their consciences by the spirit of God, and for them to repent and renounce their sins, as also any dependance on their performances, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only name under heaven whereby they can or must be saved: and so to apply to the Lord for mercy until they find by happy experience, that he saveth them by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost—whereby they become new creatures, disposed in heart, lip and life, to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of God; (not a new creature to break God's commandments, like the old man which is corrupt) consequently they believe in the seventh-day to be the Sabbath of the Lord—and in water-baptism, by way of immersion, and, generally, in the laying on of hands, as also the resurrection of the dead and the eter-

nal judgment ; likewise in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper : and as to their faith or tenets, in a minute detail as they hold to bible doctrines, much like other sects of christians.

Some sections of several of those churches, believe in the washing of another's feet, at appointed times, &c.—But as the Sabbath and Baptism are their distinguishing tenets, of which I shall say more in its proper place, if the Lord will, it is needless to be more particular as to their doctrines ; for those smaller matters are left to each one's conscience, and do not affect christian charity or fellowship, in case they do not break one of the least of those Ten solemn Precepts, and teach men so, &c.

As a people they have ever conducted as good citizens, by habits of industry, and bearing their part of the public burdens of the States. They have ever manifested a cheerful compliance with the laws of our country ; as it is not known, that ever an individual member of those churches ever bore arms against their country in the American Revolution, or has ever been concerned in any rebellion in any state, but have been forward in supporting the constituted authorities of government in all lawful ways (unless human laws interfered with God's divine laws) and it is quite remarkable that among all the Elders, that have been ordained among this people, from their rise to the present time, which is near one hundred and forty years, there is not an instance of one of them being guilty of any scandalous immorality ; but their lives have been marked by purity of morals, and exemplary piety and virtue.—

And altho' none among them have had human titles,

as, Doctors of Divinity, or been privileged, generally, with any thing more than an ordinary education, and have been, mostly, hard labouring men for the support of their families; and consequently have had no leisure to study abstruse points of divinity, &c. yet it is believed that they have generally been sound in the faith, and able ministers of the new Testament—Rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving the different characters their portion in due season, as any preachers, of the various christian sects; and in point of example in piety and morality, inferior to none.

With regard to church government, this people profess to be governed by the rules of Christ, or the method that God has ordained in his word of Divine Revelation, and consequently they are very much opposed to man's prescriptions when they are opposed to Divine Revelation. And as there is diversity of sentiment among christians, on this subject, it may not be improper to make some remarks.—

We find when God introduced Religion by Moses, he fixed the order and government of his church in an absolute and hereditary order, as God was their king—and Moses too, is said to be king in Jeshurun Deut. xxxiii. 5. But kings govern by laws, and officers to administer them. So also, the priesthood in that dispensation, was confined to Aaron's family; and the stranger that came nigh, was to be put to death, &c. Now as God's church then was a national church, and nearly all the ordinances of worship, were carnal or external, and those ordinances so exactly fixed, by divine appointment, they might use the secular force to oblige them to conform to those institutions—(and here we may ob-

serve that the law of sacrifices and tythes, &c. by which the priests had their support, as to temporal living, was never to be taken by force of the civil law, but those that neglected or refused to bring their offering, remained unclean, and were excluded the fellowship of Israel or the sanctuary: so that they excluded themselves, as the Lord ever delighted in the free-will offering of his people, which matter of free-will, is an article between God and every soul)—but the civil force, or the force of man, never did, nor never can oblige a man to do a real pious, virtuous and devout act to God, and to God's acceptance of the soul; as that must be freely devoted, and God has not given one man such controul over another man's conscience—Hence when Christ appears as a Son over his own house, and being that prophet that God's Israel was to hear in all things, there was a change of priesthood, and consequently of that external law. But observe, he never changed the natural and moral obligations among mankind. So long as man is in a state of probation, and visible order and worship is continued; so long there is an unavoidable necessity of government; at least while man is imperfect: and there can be no government, unless some subject or obey.

So the divine Saviour was very explicit, in distinguishing the things that belong to Cæsar, (or civil governors) and the things that belong to God, and directs us to give both their due, and also set the example by being conformed to all the laws of the nation that were not repugnant to the laws of God. So also his apostles are particular in their directions, to render to all men their due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom and

fear, &c. and to fear God and honour the King, or supreme magistrate, &c. and not even to speak evil of dignities, (or officers of church or state) and to be followers of them as they followed Christ—who was holy and harmless, and separated from sinners.

See further on this subject, under next head.

THEIR GENERAL CONFERENCE.

THIS denomination of christians have been in the practice of holding yearly meetings, and of visiting sister churches, from early times. But in or about the time of the American Revolution, the practice was somewhat impeded : and as the youth and others, out of the pales of the church, imbibed bad habits, of horse-racing, &c. at such times ; and the laws of the state then were somewhat slack, to punish such disorders ; their yearly meetings were given up for a time ; and I conclude their cause suffered much by it.

As there was, in some churches, evident signs of discord and separations, &c.—and it seems morally impossible, long to maintain union and consistency of order and fellowship, in so many remote branches of a community ; unless some such intercourse is kept up, in order for all to understand the rules of fellowship ; as also thereby is the most ready way to root out those natural prejudices, and selfish partialities so common to all frail mortals : and as travelling into distant parts, and learning the habits and customs of different people ; (provided we carefully avoid the evil and treasure up the good) tends greatly to enlarge our stock of useful knowledge ; so mutual visits, and intercourse by acquaintance, enlarges our charity, and strengthens the bonds of union and fellowship ; as well as greatly assists a preacher, to present his apples of gold, in pictures of silver ; and to consolidate his judgment, and

make him more useful in his day and calling; as well as refreshing the spirits of all, like cold water to a thirsty soul—Therefore, those kind of yearly meetings were renewed; and an attempt made to make them more useful and methodical, by giving them a degree of order and consistency; and after several years of trial, and many objections, and propositions, and modifications, from different persons, and churches of this sect,—they finally all, I believe, consented to the following Articles or Constitution, or rather, the Report of a committee chosen at Hopkinton, at a general Meeting, A. D. 1805, and composed of a member from eight sister churches; and is as followeth: viz.—

THE Committee appointed to revise the several propositions heretofore proposed as the rules of fellowship, among the churches of our order, report; that as last year's recommendations have generally met the approbation of our churches: Therefore we beg leave to lay before you a transcript, of the Articles recommended to churches by the general Meeting or Conference, held at Piscataway the 19th of October 1804—with some alterations, and a few Articles in addition to the former.

ARTICLE I.

WHEREAS there has been different names given to the general Meetings or Conferences, and as the different churches have general or annual meetings, and as the name of the meeting does not at all affect the nature of the business, and that we may clearly understand each other, it is thought most advisable to give this meeting the name of GENERAL CONFERENCE; and that in future, all letters from the churches be directed, 'To the Sabbatarian General Conference.'

ART. II.

We think it advisable for the churches of our fellowship and profession, to hold a circular general conference yearly; at such times and places as may seem convenient to be agreed upon, and appointed annually for the ensuing year, by the elders, messengers and members, who compose the General Conference for the time being.

ART. III.

It is to be understood, that all things transacted in such General Conference, be done by way of advice, council or recommendation, and by no means to affect or alter the government or discipline of the churches, in their individual capacity: But that each church enjoy their own mode of discipline, as to them may seem most agreeable to the word of God; and that each church, desirous of holding annual meetings, will always appoint their time and place for such meetings as they think proper.

ART. IV.

Whenever the General Conference is holden at any church where there is an annual appointment, it is tho't to be the most proper for both to be holden at the same time.

ART. V.

It is thought proper that such General Conference be conducted by a moderator, clerk or clerks, and such other officers as from time to time may appear needful (said officers) to be appointed by the free vote of the elders, messengers and members then present.

ART. VI.

And in all cases that require a vote, it is meant, that each church have one vote only, in deciding any ques-

tion ; which vote shall be a majority of the church, or messenger representing any church.—And it is considered incumbent on such General Conference to hear and attend to all questions that concern the welfare of the churches, and give counsel and advice, as times and circumstances may require.

ART. VII.

It is understood, in cases of controversy between sister churches, that the General Conference, made up of the messengers from the sister churches, be the council or judges to determine said controversy.

ART. VIII.

In case where members move at a distance from the church they first covenanted with, and do not put themselves under the watch-care of a sister church, nearest to their residence ; in case such member walk disorderly, it is understood the right and duty of the clerk of any church, having knowledge of such disorderly member, to certify the same to the church to which they respectively belong, as soon as may be.

ART. IX.

It is understood, that no church in our union, can receive into their fellowship a person, except they observe the seventh day for a Sabbath : neither such as have not been baptized by immersion.

ART. X.

It is understood, that when alterations or amendments in our rules of fellowship or constitution, is wished for by any church, such alteration be proposed to the Gene-

ral Conference ; and by their recommending such alteration to the several churches in our order, and said churches agreeing to the same, shall be considered as part of the rules of our fellowship.

The above Articles are humbly submitted to the General Conference, by your Committee, for your approbation, &c.—Signed by

HENRY CLARKE,
AMOS STILLMAN,
JABEZ BEEBE,
MATTHEW STILLMAN,
CLARKE BURDICK,
ABRAHAM DUNHAM,
JEDEDIAH DAVIS, and
STEPHEN MAXSON,

} Committee.

At HOPKINTON, Sept. 15, 1805.

[Taken from our Church Records.]

I conclude no church of this order has made any material objection to receive them as rules of fellowship ; they may therefore be considered as the articles of constitution for the Sabbatarians, if they have any.

No doubt those are, like other productions and explanations of man, imperfect, and may admit of great alterations and improvement. And as the bible is to all sects of christians, somewhat like those maxims of common law, in use by all civilized nations, and yet form no express constitution for any one nation. So it appears very needful for every denomination of christians, if not every church, to have some rules of fellowship, that are so plain that all may understand when they break this compact, or covenant.

Now, if neither Christ nor his apostles gave any particular direction for the method of proceeding in such

cases, or with regard to church government generally, it was evidently left to the prudence and judgment of his church or churches to order those matters as the exigences and circumstances of cases requires: and it is evident that such modes as contribute to the union and consistency of order, is not only warrantable, but best: even such as the people are most generally agreed in, in case they answer the purposes of government, and are not contrary to God's word; for if there is no express rule prescribed in the New Testament, with regard to the order of God's house, or kingdom, it must be looked for in the Old Dispensation; as I have no opinion of looking on Jesus Christ as a new God, or in any moral perfection, any ways altered from what he was when the law was given by Moses: neither did he come to give a new law, as touching man's moral obligations to God or each other, either in church or state. Now we have express command, Deut. xvi. 18. "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee," &c. So also Titus i. 5. "and ordain elders in every city," &c. Certainly cities do not need elders more than churches, as God's house is a house of order; and order cannot obtain without rules, in this imperfect state. So also, at the great feasts, all Israel was to attend and bring their offerings, as also the sanhedrums set for the good and well ordering the affairs of the people of Israel. Likewise, we have account in Acts xv. of the controversy that arose about the doctrine of circumcision; the church at Antioch sent messengers, or some of their elders, to Jerusalem about this matter: and Mark, verse 6, "and the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider

of this matter." It appears the multitude of believers were not called together; neither was it practicable; but they acquiesced in the decision of their rulers, and harmony was restored in the churches.

So we find in the early ages of the christian church, (by history) that the christians found the necessity of calling councils or synods, to determine those new controversies that sprang up, and to give order and consistency to the churches, &c. And unless we depend on divine interposition, in a miraculous manner, without the aid of man to quell such disorders, it is morally impossible that churches can long hold consistency and order in fellowship, without such meetings.

Again; when we consider that the chief end in Christ's coming on earth, his doings, sufferings, &c. was to save poor, lost, sinful man, by making a suitable atonement to God's holy law, and providing means to renew or renovate the souls of mankind, and thereby bring them into a real subjection to his divine government, from pure motives of love and obedience to God, and justice and benevolence to their fellow creatures, and compassion towards their enemies, and thereby fit them in this state of probation to love and adore God's amiable nature, and holy character, (and the only way for man to manifest, or prove his love to God, is by keeping his commandments, as saith the Saviour, "If ye love me, keep my commandments—He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." John, 14. 15, 24.) in order to their being happy in the enjoyment of God hereafter—or to save them from their sins here (as sin is the transgression of the law) and to save them from suffering hereafter, &c.

We may rationally conclude, that vain and delusive must be the hopes of souls, let their professions be what they may, who wantonly and wilfully contemn God's holy moral requirements, and despise his government, &c. Therefore, as God has given us his law, to direct and govern us in a state of society, which law is to be exercised in a civil way for the protection and security of our persons and property, and given the civil magistrate power to compel a conformity thereto, or to punish offenders in a corporal manner, even to death, in cases of great crimes—and that each member of society must, according their stations, sphere and abilities, contribute to the maintainance of that government, or lose the benefits of it—So also, his gospel is designed to save the soul of man from allowed sin here, and make them happy hereafter: and as all visible orders, whether civil or ecclesiastical, unavoidably incur expense; so he has made it incumbent on all the parts in proportion to their respective abilities, to subject to, and support such ecclesiastical government, or forfeit their membership: for deprive a church of the right of excommunicating unruly or vicious members; and how would Christ's kingdom appear in the world! And this I conceive, is the main odds between civil and ecclesiastical, or church government; viz. the civil may enforce compulsion to just laws, by the arm of flesh; but the only punishment in church government, is exclusion from fellowship; and such a right all christian churches have, to judge who and what they will fellowship, or they have no rights at all. And was that right only exercised in real meekness and love; happy would it have been for the christian part of the world: but by connecting ec-

clesiastical and civil government together, and using the sword of civil power, instead of the sword of the spirit which is the word of God, to reclaim or punish the mind, is the source of all persecution; and the means of rivers of blood being shed for conscience sake. The sword of the civil magistrate, doubtless, has made many hypocrites, but never a true christian; and as the nature of agency or power given to any man or body of men, necessarily admit of their doing evil, as well as good; so it is conceived that the main danger that may arise from those meetings or councils, lays in admitting them to prescribe laws for the church; or in taking their decisions for perfect truth; even when those decisions are not conformable to the laws of God. From this error arose the power of the popes, and the tyranny, oppression, persecutions and wars, that have deluged the christian church; as is abundantly evident by all ecclesiastical history.

When we rightly contemplate devotion, or the spiritual worship of God; it is a thing, between God and the soul, as unseen, by mortals, as God; or the soul is, consequently, utterly out of the province of man, to judge with perfection or any degree of certainty, when, or how far, his fellow-mortal is devout, or a real spiritual worshipper of God; and it is a nice point (when we consider the operations of nature, the influence of customs fashions, laws of men, and the various arts and passions of men, in our world and even in ourselves) to ascertain when our own souls are really devout to God: therefore the Saviour saith: "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" hence, as pure devotion is simply between God and the soul, man cannot make it in another man, nor pre-

vent it in his fellow creature: all the grounds we have to judge upon, with regard to another's devotion, is from our own natures; the Being and Revelation of God; and the appearances we see in our fellow-mortal's countenance, words and actions. And as it is evident from scripture, as well as history and our own observations, that mankind may appear as devout in the worship of an idol or false god, as the true God: so we have no standard in this case, but the Bible or divine Revelation; as that determines the difference, and shews when men are under the guidance of the spirit of God, or the spirit of error; for enthusiasm and fanaticism, mankind has ever been subject to: hence all those laws and punishments, made by popes, kings or legislators, to compel men to be religious, or to conform to their ideas or tenets; I consider prejudicial to true devotion: for one man, even a slave, has as good right to direct the exercise of his soul to God, as a king has; and if kings or learned men have more knowledge of the truth of things, and the true worship of God, than the ignorant slave; let them remember, the only way to make the ignorant learn truth, is by example and instruction or advice—but not by compulsion or force. Great men may have knowledge, that is apt to puff up; when the ignorant may have charity, that edifieth—Therefore all acts of civil rulers or uninspired legislators, to tolerate or establish any religion, or to punish men for their acts of devotion, (when those acts do not infringe on their neighbours' liberties, persons, or property) are absurd.

As the chief end of civil government, is, to protect, defend and serve men's persons and property, that they may be secure and enjoy civil liberty; and cannot possi-

bly controul the soul: it is quite out of the province of man, to direct his fellow man, what and how, and when, he shall worship his God. The great Maker and Judge of souls, has given direction in his sacred word, as to the dedication or worship of the soul; and to him all souls must account. And such seems to be the nature of the soul, that it abhors being controuled by creature man—Hence it is evident, that the more a person is persecuted for conscience sake, the stronger he grows; and perhaps the christian religion in general has been the most pure and increased when the hottest persecutions have prevailed: as when *one* is burnt for his religion, *ten* will arise, as it were, out of his ashes—But if any man, under a notion of devotion or religion, will commit a trespass against his neighbour's person, or property, or destroy his family or property, &c.; in such cases, the civil power has right, and it is their duty, to interfere, and punish men for their crimes—but not for their conscience. But, perhaps, the reader may say that the conscience was the cause of the crime:—I answer the evil conscience, God may judge; the crime, man may judge: for how many persons have suffered for the act of murder, when they had no murder in their hearts; while many that have hated their neighbour in heart, and yet have not committed the act of murder, and cannot be punished in this world; but which is the murderer in the sight of God.

But possibly, the reader may say: 'What then shall we do with all those different sects; and those pretended prophets, enthusiasts, fanaticks, lunaticks, and preachers, that go about our world, crying; Lo! here, or Lo! there?' &c. Answer. In the first place, be attentive to

your bible, and devout in your soul to God; and in case they prophecy directly in contradiction to your bible, you are not to fear them; if they preach another Christ, or God, than your bible tells of, you are not to go after them, nor follow them; and so in less errors, "to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, they have not the true light;" let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind: but do not be found fighting against God. Now if preachers have no hearers, they will soon stop preaching; and if enthusiasts and fanatics, have none to hear their dreams, and countenance them, they will sooner forbear, than if you follow and persecute them.

Secondly: learn to distinguish between essential, and mere circumstantial points of religion; and in circumstantial points, put on charity; as all mortals are imperfect in knowledge and practice, fill your covenant with your brethren; and in case they are in an error, if capital, make it appear by scripture testimony, and convince them: but not set up your judgment, or your revelations or conception of things, in place of God's standard of truth. As to different sects, they serve to keep the scriptures pure from corrupt interpolations and erroneous editions, as well as for men to examine for themselves.

Thirdly: examine the character and employment, as well as the company, of such preachers. It is easier for people to say well, than to do well. We read of no true prophet, preacher, or servant of the Lord, but what sustained a fair moral character; and was in some lawful employment: "For if a man provide not for his own, and especially for them of his own house, he has denied the

faith, and is worse than an infidel." It is truly lamentable to see and hear of the numbers of would-be preachers, that pretend to a special call of God to preach, &c.; and some of infamous characters, having no regular standing in any church; no licence from any to preach; and neither learning to know what they affirm, nor ability to make a rational man think they are called of God or his people to that sacred work:—and yet, however strange it may appear, they find hearers; and some too, that are professed christians, in standing in respectable churches; and some too, that perhaps contribute more for the support of such preachers in a short time, than they are willing to give their regular and respectable ordained preacher and their pastor, all his life time. It is a serious and important question: Which do the most mischief to society, such preachers, or those that run after them and support them in their errors? It is evident that mankind have pursued all manner of ways to gain a temporary support; and although we must be cautious how we judge of motives; yet, we have reason to fear, some men have attempted the most sacred callings, with no better motive than the horse-jockey—And if men will encourage by going to hear and supporting such characters, that are hardly entitled to common hospitality and men of no standing in any church and of no probity, to the neglect of their covenant obligations with their brethren and minister; how can they expect any thing else, but to be left to believe a lie, and to be in a strong delusion.

I once knew an instance in one of the eastern states: a young man, a stranger in that quarter, without any credentials whatever; yet he could preach to suit almost

any hearers—So great was the anxiety of the people, to hear the New Preacher, that the meeting-houses were thronged, and he extolled—And I even heard a venerable old Elder (not of the Sabbatarian order) in his own pulpit, and at the time said stranger had been preaching there, not only fellowship his doctrine, but compared him to the great Whitfield; and so much was made of the poor stroller, that he was carried about (on horses—as he had none of his own) from one house to another, and preached almost every day and night, for a while—And had it not been for his character getting about, he might have done great harm to settled churches—But soon his character comes forward; and he perhaps aware of it, borrows cloathes and an horse, and puts off. However the horse and cloathes were recovered; and the last I heard of said young man, he went off with a company of fiddlers, &c.—Some thought him love-crack'd—as he was fond of women—But, be that as it may, such seems to be the weakness of human nature.

I knew another instance in the same quarter, of a Negro preacher, a stranger: he was so extolled by some, (not of the Sabbatarian order) that meetings were attended from place to place, by night and by day; and great appearances of devotion and power of religion, &c. so called; and married women of weak constitutions, and not the best characters, who were professors of religion, would, by way of eminence, call him Father, &c. But the poor Negro was then living in the state of adultery; and when he was accused of the crime, would answer, 'it was not possible, as God assisted him to do so much good in preaching,' &c.—However, he had to own the fact, and suffer the consequence.

I might mention a number more of similar instances, which I have been knowing to in the course of my life, that I omit: but for the sake of the cause of truth, and the peace of society, I think expedient to mention one more circumstance of recent date:—

A man had joined a church of repute in the christian world, and appeared to be zealous and steady for a year or two: but the church or the leader of the church did not suit him; he grew uneasy, and said he could not enjoy religion with them; yet he disclaimed the idea of wanting the lead in the church; he wished for perfect equality; and insisted, the youngest or weakest members had as good right to speak, exhort, or govern, &c. as their minister—He finally withdraws from his brethren, and he with a few more of like minds, set up a meeting in the woods, for a time; and at length find doors opened for them; and lately 6 or 7 sign articles of faith and covenant, too inconsistent to relate: and one of the male members (as there were 4 male, and 3 female members) and one or two female members, proceed to ordain the two leading members—and those ordained members proceed to administer the Lord's supper; and have since baptized a number; and appear, by what I learn, (as I have not been to their meetings) to be very devout and zealous, and have a number to hear and follow them. I forbear to relate the manner, in which I understand their meetings are conducted—But would observe, that, if man is a reasonable being, and we have a just idea of God, as the source of order, wisdom and reason; the religion he has designed for his reasonable creature must be a system of reason and order—For although he may see fit to reveal some things, far beyond the reach of

the reason of human or finite creatures; yet what man can comprehend, is perfectly consistent with right reason; and I consider the christian system the most reasonable and orderly, of any in the universe, if rightly understood.

But such proceeding, as above related, must originate from the spirit or word of God, or from human invention; alias. fanaticism, superstition, &c.—and I conclude the candid, well-informed, will be at no loss to judge which. But what ground does such proceedings give to the Atheist, Deist and Infidels? Surely it is lamentable, and must be for a lamentation to sober christians. But some may ask, Is there no way to remedy those evils? I know of no better way than for churches to keep a close gospel discipline, and each member fill his place, and live according to God's word; and let such stand or fall to their own master (unless they commit acts against the peace of civil society, or neglect their families, as has been observed) for we are advertised, II. Tim. iii. 13: "But evil men and seducers, shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Let us see to it, that we are not of that class.

It is evident, that the prophecies of the scriptures are fulfilling; and that time hastens to a close—when every man shall give account of himself to God. If all professed christians would learn to govern their own evil passions, it would be easy for churches—But such is our unruly members, that they cause our own souls trouble; and sometimes injure the cause of God. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."—It may be they are sincere; what then? Was not Paul sincere when he was persecuting Christ, and verily thought he was doing God service? or, Are not the Mahometans, and o-

ther people, sincere in their religion? It would be absurd to say they were not: consequently, if sincerity is the rule that God, or men, will judge men's actions by, solely, I see not but that one man's religion and actions are as good as another's; and so we shall confound right with wrong, and truth with error.

But sincerity, or common conscience, being the result of our own judgment; now if our judgment is biassed in favour of ourselves, even our conceited inspiration, or by any other man's, or woman's revelation, it is of the creature, and not of the Creator—and there is nothing more common in our world, than for mankind to have partialities for themselves and their connexions.—Now if God has given us his Divine Revelation, even his law and gospel, as a standard of faith and practice—and by which he will judge mankind in the great day of account; or, “in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.” Rom. ii. 16.—or as saith the Saviour: “The word I have spoken, the same shall judge you, in the last day; and if as many as sin without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law:” and if St. Paul was under the law to Christ, (I. Cor. ix. 21.) we may depend, that unless our notions of things, and the feeling of our minds, and our actions, do not in some good degree correspond with that sacred rule; vain will be our pretended revelations, and devotions, &c.—

Hence, if all professed christians would come to that sacred rule, there might be, “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,” one Church, one Fellowship, &c. But since every one must have a doctrine, a revelation, an interpretation, &c. to suit their own fancies, or selfish ima-

ginations, there evidently will be a great variety of opinions and sects in the christian part of the world; and there is no way to remedy those evils arising from fanaticism and vain enthusiasm, as it arises from the nature of man in his fallen situation, that I know of, unless we closely adhere to the written word of Divine Revelation and allow it the plain obvious meaning of the sacred text; and always keep in view the character of God, and the accountability of man: for if we destroy either, we make religion a mere piece of priestcraft—Hence those doctrines of men, that hold out the idea of Fate, or unconditional Election, as also Universalism, or the idea of annihilation, it is conceived, never did any good to the cause of God or the souls of men—Such notions being contrary to the main scope of scripture, our own true conscience, and the nature of things: for it is absurd to conceive of punishment, after death, where there is no crime; and to constitute a crime, there must be a degree of agency; which implies light, knowledge and ability to do otherwise than we do; hence saith the Saviour, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin (John ix. 41.) and to him that knoweth to good, and doth it not, to him it is sin; again, for sin is the transgression of the law; for I had not known sin but by the law; and without law, sin is dead.” All must allow this to have reference to God’s law;—and if all christians would really live and act in life, as Christ lived, or according to their ability, would live so; there would be little cause of stumbling at their walk as he walked in God’s laws.—But this antinomian notion of no law, no sin, and what not, will do souls no good.

Some tell of disinterested benevolence, and a law of love, &c. Mere chimeras!—For how can a being

that is interested in all its actions, act disinterestedly? And if we are to give account to God, of all our thoughts, idle words, and vain actions; surely, we cannot act disinterestedly: and yet we may act from a sordid, selfish motive, to so great a degree, as to make our act criminal in the sight of God, because our act is not in faith and submission to the will of God, but rather in the will of the creature. So also, Love, as it is the noblest faculty of the soul, is the best motive to influence our actions. But where do we get scripture or logic, to call it a law? any more than fear, hope, or other faculties of the soul. Therefore, mankind as moral agents, are influenced or governed in their actions, by the hope of reward, or the fear of punishment; which is the only way to govern accountable beings; for, "if thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." [Gen. iv. 7.] Hence the misery of men arises from their own presuming to judge what is well, or ill, instead of attending to God's word for a determination of right and wrong—Hence their choosing to act that which gratifies the idol *self*, for the present, without regarding the future, or God and their neighbour; brings them into the greatest miseries in this life, and that which is to come.

EXTERNAL FELLOWSHIP.

ANOTHER source of disorder and confusion in churches, it is conceived, is christians not well understanding, or considering the rule and meaning of External Fellowship.

Let us then learn to distinguish between internal and external fellowship, & between heaven born & heaven bound souls: and if our judgment is imperfect in one of the cases, we shall find we are entirely incompetent to judge the other, and must leave it for God to judge. Internal union or fellowship, is gained or felt by that charitable disposition we entertain of another's sincerity and true devotion to God; thinking such is born of the spirit of God, and is a true worshipper of God; and while we are conscious to ourselves that we are born of God, and sincerely aim to worship him, our internal fellowship is as natural, as two drops of water are to unite and make one. It must be acknowledged that such feelings are very grateful, and some term it the life of religion; and surely if we had no sense of feeling, we should not retain all the faculties God has given us as creatures.

But let us remember, "the Heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." None knows another's heart but God; man acts from various motives, and assumes a variety of appearances utterly out of the knowledge of his fellow creature: and if those that are born of the Spirit, or heaven-born, are as unseen to man as the wind is, (and I think the Saviour gave us that idea, John, iii. 8.) all we can judge of in the case, is the effect; the wind causes the trees to bend or bow, and

there are other causes that may make them bend or bow. Now if the soul of the rebellious sinner really bows to God, and we can see it, we shall see such souls disposed to submit to God's word of revelation, and yield obedience to God's law and gospel, and walk in God's commands and ordinances, as did Zechariah and Elizabeth of old—and then we may, with the utmost propriety, not only have internal, but external fellowship with such.

I am far from thinking God will justify all the separations and different sects of communion that have taken place in the christian church: the fact is, I have no right to judge the state of another's soul, as I don't know what allowance God may make for human frailty, and errors of the head, &c.—and it might be a great want of charity in me, and criminal presumption, to say such an one as does not follow with me, is an enemy to God, &c.—Nay, let me rather charitably hope they may be accepted of God, and leave them to stand or fall to their own master.

But, as man is a visible being, and his Maker has given him some ability to judge of visible things; and as the external things of religion, or the visible appearance of the kingdom of God, or church of Christ, is to be seen; so he has given us a visible rule to judge by, even his law and gospel, as the test to try doctrines and actions by; and has warned us, “to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” Now what are works of darkness, unless it be sin, or the transgression of God's law?—And, saith the beloved disciple (I. John, i. 7.) “But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin:” and chap. ii. 4. “He that

saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him:" and saith, Prov. vi. 23, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.—Consequently, the rule of external fellowship must be something certain and visible; and such is the written word of God, or the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—wherein we are directed who and what to fellowship: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and on the Israel of God.—If there come any and bring not this doctrine, receive him not; neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition he received of us." II. Thes. iii. 6 & 11. "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies." Rom. 16. 17. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them, [18] for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly: and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the heart of the simple." Observe, good words and fair speeches, or pretended sincerity will not do, without conformity to the word: I. Cor. v. 11. "If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no not to eat.

Again: as the meaning or marks of External Fellowship, is in eating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper together; so in the old dispensation, the Passover supper

was the token of fellowship and what was then requisite or preparatory for eating that supper, was circumcision and being clean according to the letter or external directions of the law, and visible order of God's house: so, methinks, the prerequisites for the Lord's supper are circumcision of the heart, or a new creature that is conformed to the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, in an external order, is necessary: for St. Paul gives the idea of a new creature, and faith that works by love, and keeping the commandments of God, as synonymous ideas; (see I. Cor. vii. 19, compared with Gal. v. 6 & 6 15.) and it appears that there was a variety of sects and sentiments as to doctrines in the old Dispensation, as the Sadducees, the Pharisees, Essens, &c. and yet, being conformed to the law, kept the Passover together. So also it appears that our Saviour eat with Judas as well as the rest of the twelve—And I see no room to doubt but that the apostles admitted Ananias and Saphira to the communion table until their hypocrisy was apparent, and perhaps Simon the sorcerer, &c.—and it is worthy of notice that so long as members contented themselves to remain in the primitive church as private hearers, and conformed to the external order of the church we read of none that was excluded from the mark of external fellowship—But when they became so fond of their own attainments and knowledge that they must be teachers, and brought forward absurd doctrines that led to evil practices; then they were excluded: however it appears that generally in the first centuries the false teachers withdrew first from the apostolic church, before they were excluded the external fellowship of the church: hence saith the text; “these be they that

separate themselves; sensual having not the spirit, [it would be absurd to suppose such were actuated by no spirit] that is not the true spirit of God: and even those teachers that held circumcision and keeping the ceremonial law, as essential to salvation; we have no account that the apostles debarred them of the communion or fellowship until they first separated—True, they let the church know that they gave them no such commandment to preach such doctrine, &c.—Hence saith the apostle John, I. Epi. ii. 19, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us,” &c.

So we find, in process of time, men became so very wise above what was written, in prying into mysterious points, that led some to deny that Jesus Christ was come in the flesh, or to deny the real body of Christ, and some to deny his divinity, while others were corrupting the pure and simple doctrines and ceremonies of the church with heathenish ideas and idolatrous practices; while others, from vain enthusiasm or pretended revelation, brought forward absurd doctrines and practices, that have rent the christian church into several hundred different sects and communion of fellowship; and all for not receiving and obeying the plain written word of divine Revelation: and it has generally been the case, that a bare inference drawn from scripture that is different from the common acceptance, if not essential, has not produced a separation, so long as brethren would let each member think for themselves, and so long as all acted conformable to God’s law and gospel requirements—But when men would insist on others’ adopting their sentiments, or exclude them, or separate from them, then the fellowship is broken and new sects arise.

What if A. tells his brother B. (and they are both private brethren) he thinks that the bread in the communion after consecration is transubstantiated or turned into the real body of Christ. B. says, No brother, it is bread still, and only a representation of Christ's body.—Now if each enjoy their own thoughts, and charitably fill their covenant obligations in the church—who will be harmed? But if A. still persists and calls that bread a God, and requires B. to worship it, or he will part with him, or either attempts force to compel a different sentiment, we may see the consequence. So where a private brother attempts to improve his gift, if on trial it should appear that he is unsound in the faith, or his improvement not edifying, his brethren should labour with him in love and faithfulness, and he ought to hold his peace; and if he will persist to the grief of his brethren, they should admonish him, and not hear him, and he will desist or leave the church: and thus troubles may be avoided without force, or even the sharpness of excommunication.

When we consider the importance and responsibility of an acknowledged leader or an ordained minister of the word—a church and the eldership should be exceeding careful to know well his character and tenets; for in case any church call forward a worthless character, or one of known errors in sentiment, they must in some degree be accountable for his errors—But where the character is fair, and the error in his sentiment not known, the nature of their call and his charge being to preach the gospel or word, as revealed in the scriptures in case he afterwards broaches those corrupt doctrines that are in the world, he does it at his own risk or responsibility, and the church is clear of it, yet should la-

bour to reclaim him, and if he still persist to force his errors on his brethren, they may be justified in refusing to hear him, and in using gospel means to silence his preaching. But all should be careful how they mistake truth for error—for error, let it be of ever so long standing and reputed for orthodoxy, will never make a truth; and it is evident, by Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, as also by other historians, that quite opposite ideas have been held for truth, in different periods of time, even by the leading members and majority of churches; and even now among the learned as well as the illiterate, we find great contradiction as to what is truth in certain doctrines. All cannot be right; as truth is, like God, unchangeable—Man's believing or disbelieving it, will not alter it in the least; that is, those fundamental truths contained in our bible. Therefore, if we let go bible religion, or revealed truth therein contained, or receive any thing from any source that contradicts or is opposed to that sure word of prophecy, as Peter calls it, "to which we do well to give heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place," &c. we have no standard at all—but must forever, while in this world, be in a maze of uncertainty in our minds.

But, says friend Q. is not the Spirit that dictated that word of Divine Revelation, as you call it, greater and surer than the written word, which some call a dead letter? I answer: Can a being be greater or less than himself: now admitting that the bible is in fact [i. e. the law and gospel or revealed religion] the pure work or promise of God, and that God is perfect and immutable; where can there be any odds as to possession or certainty of fact. In case I hold a bank bill, and it is a true

one, and on an able and punctual bank; is it not worth just what it promises, when all allow it will be paid on sight? Surely, unless I am a miser, and love hard money, I am just as happy and as safe, if not more so, than if I had the hard cash by me, and the person of the signer is my confidence. But, it is true, there are many banking houses that fail, and also many counterfeit bills in circulation, and the signer will not pay counterfeit bills—So we read there are many false spirits as well as false prophets gone out into the world. Now if a true bill is greater than a counterfeit, so revealed religion is surer than any man's pretended inspiration that is opposed to it; for it, both agree they are the same in substance; but that which is the standard to try the true bill by, must be the greatest of the two—And if mankind take away revealed religion, or the bible, there is no standard: for, separate from that, man knoweth no more about God and Eternity than the wild savages of the wilderness, and his notion of something somewhere that tells him to smoke it, and use his tomahawk, &c. may be as sure as friend Q's notions that are contrary to the bible. As to the bible, as being a dead letter, we all know a genuine note or bill is good until it is paid; so the promises of God in the bible, as relates to the present state, have been made good; or paid to every character they were made to; but the main part relates to another world, or state of things; and I doubt not but will also answer the full demand or promises to characters, there and then, &c.—But all counterfeit bills, and false lights or spirits, must be turned aside.

The notion of an invisible church or worship, in this visible world, is as vain as to call a departed spirit, or

the soul, a man: for it takes a spirit or soul, and a body, to make what we call, a man. When the soul has fled, the man is dead—the body is still visible; (before it is decayed, or put out of our sight)—we call it a corpse—the spirit or soul in the separate state, is called (if any visibility to it) a ghost: and the idea of resurrection will not apply to that which does not die.

It is evident that friend Q. is as precise and as formal in his way as friend P. and as he has generally much the same morals, he may be a good citizen. But whether his notion of discarding or neglecting the external ordinances of the gospel, that the divine Saviour and his apostles commanded and practised, is from God or men, is for him seriously to consider. I am not disposed to question his sincerity; but remember, sincerity does not make truth.

I hope I shall not offend my readers by relating a story I lately heard. It was represented as matter of fact:

A certain Baptist Preacher, who had preached some time in a neighbourhood where friend Q. lived. He noticed that friend Q. never came to his meeting; and that when any of Q's sect came along to preach, said friend was forward to notify, &c. his meeting. One day B. asked Q. what was the reason he never came to hear him preach, when he had opened his meeting-house doors and attended to hear his friends preach, &c. Says Q. you study your sermons, and preach the letter:—my friends preach by the spirit, &c. Says B. how do you know I don't preach by the spirit as much as they, seeing you don't come to hear me? Says Q. will you preach from a text I shall give you? B. answered, he thought he would. Well, says Q. if you will, I will come to

hear you; and if you do preach by the spirit, I will give you the choice of my cows, and I have a number. Well says B. let me see your text. Nay, says Q. you will have time to study out something: such a day I will go to your meeting, and hand you a text, just as you are about to preach.

The day comes, and Q. appears and takes his seat. B. begins his meeting as usual, and after prayer and singing, no text presented. At length Q. puts a small piece of paper on the pulpit, (or in B's hand) with these words written thereon: '*Old cast clouts and rotten rags.*' B. was quite surprized, and at first was at some loss if such words were in the scripture; but recollecting, he soon found them, in Jer. xxxviii. 12. and went on to preach from them: and finally made a pathetic discourse from them. Q. appeared much moved; and after meeting, took B. by the hand, and said; Well, you have preached by the spirit, and the best cow is at your service. So after a while, B. visits him; and Q. orders up his cows, and tells B. to take his choice. B. thought if he picked on the largest, Q. might think him avaricious—So he cast his eye on a middling sized, trim built cow, and says, I choose this. Ah! says Q. you *preached* by the spirit, and have *chosen* by the spirit—for she is the best cow I have!

But to return. Mankind are very apt to set too much or too little by the ordinances of the gospel; or to over-rate external fellowship. Some having a notion that partaking of the elements confers grace on the receiver &c. I do not learn from scripture or reason, that the partaking of any external or visible elements, or the performance of any command, or the doing of any duty,

confers graces, or justifies the soul in any other manner than, as God has made the soul a reasonable and accountable being, and has in his word directed the rules and motives to govern the soul's actions towards him and all other beings, and has also promised to reward the obedient doer, and to punish the disobedient, the neglecter and transgressors of his law, &c.: so his promises are sure; even "heaven and earth may pass away, but his word will not fail," saith Samuel to Saul, I. Sam. xv. 22. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold! to obey is better than sacrifices; and to hearken, than the fat of rams." And the whole tenor of the scriptures, carries the same idea: see, in particular, John xiv. chap. generally, verse 23; "Jesus answered, and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

The idea conveyed by the word *grace*, is either a free unmerited gift, or enjoyment; and comprehends eternal life, as, "the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And saith the apostle to the Hebrews, speaking of Christ, (Heb. v. 9.) "and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Now if any souls think they are in the possession and enjoyment of grace, when their allowed conduct is in direct opposition to the character and requirements of God, as revealed in his word—it is to be feared such souls are under a most fatal deception; "for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; [Rom. ii. 13. compared with Mat. vii. 21. and James, i. 22, 25:

See also Luke vi. 46 to 49.—where our Lord and Judge compares the doer to the man that built his house on a rock, and the not doer to the man that built on the sand; &c.

And as the doer is blest in the deed, as saith James, I would ask any sincere, candid soul, if when they had performed any known duty or positive command of God or Christ, from a pure motive of obedience to God and subjection to his will, they did then enjoy that satisfaction that their soul wanted, or not: and so in proportion as we conform in heart, lip and life, to all his requirements, of doing and suffering the will of God, our comforts in this life ariseth, and the well-grounded hope, of life eternal through our Lord Jesus Christ in the next world.

Thus it is God that gives or confers grace, and to such characters as his word has promised it to: so also he provides food for the ravens; but what good will that food do them if they do not eat it? Is it merely eating or swallowing that nourishes the body? or is it the food that after eaten, in a way consistent with the order of nature that God has placed in all creatures, digests and nourishes the body?—and as God has given to all creatures a mouth, and faculty to receive food for their nourishment; so he has made the soul capable of receiving by faith (as a mouth to the soul) spiritual food to nourish and strengthen, and invigorate the soul. To this idea, see John vi. 57. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, [he did always those things that were pleasing to the Father] so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” Verse 63. “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing, [or little]

the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Intimating, as I conclude, that as the natural body is nourished by the mouth's receiving &c. natural food; so by the soul's receiving, by faith, his words of promise, (which, observe, is made to characters, or the doers of the work) they shall be nourished and live; "for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

But some may say I admit a condition on the creatures' part, to be fulfilled in order for their happiness here and hereafter: I readily grant, if there is no condition in the system of man's salvation; agency and accountability are quite out of the question; and absolute fate must govern, and I am as much justified in writing as I do, as St. Paul was for writing as he did—Surely such must be the consequence, in case we suppose that God absolutely fore-ordains whatsoever comes to pass—For if there is no liberty in man's will, (as the will governs the man) there can be no accountability: consequently, such an idea must confound virtue with vice, and destroy the idea of a Judgment, and, virtually, all religion. But there is a material difference between supposing that man has all liberty or power to will at his own option, and at any time he may choose; and that of a certain degree of liberty to will and choose at certain times. Now Time, as well as Man and man's power or liberty to will, &c. are the property of God, and not of the creature—and he gives, 'a time and a season to every purpose under the sun.'

Therefore, real christians should have their fellowship in the truth, built on some known, stable, sure rules; and such is the revealed word of God, that it is a lamp to

our feet, and a light to our path, and so plain that he that runs may read. But if we will not run in that straight way to life, but will choose our own crooked ways, and will follow the lights of the creature, (or man's enthusiastic notions that lead away from that sure word of prophecy) and must fellowship, externally, all those that tell of good feelings, &c. Hear what the Lord says by his prophet, Isa. 50. 11. "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled; this shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Also, Mal. ii. 13. "And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out; insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand."

Paul tells Timothy, II. Epi. i. 13. "Hold fast the form of sound words," &c. Now if the scripture does not contain those sound words, where shall we find them? and if we have not got them, how can we hold them fast? &c. If the words, God, Christ, Law, Gospel, and Gospel Institutions, or scripture forms of performing them or acknowledging and doing them, are not sound, I know of none.

So also St. Paul tells of some 'having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such, turn away.' II. Tim. iii. 5. Observe, it was a form—Now all things that are visible, have some form: and it is evident that the idolatrous worshippers we read of, had a form, and perhaps as much apparent zeal; nay more, even to sacrifice their children to their God—But let us remember it was not the form that God's word directed.

We may, by reading the context, see those characters that St. Paul had reference to, who he says denies the power of godliness, and to sum it up they were not conformed to the directions of God's written word. Now if the power that may appear in a form of godliness, does not incline people to be conformed to God's revealed word, may we not easily see from whence the appearance cometh, and judge in ourselves what is right?—Hence, if we compare man's conduct by that sacred standard, we may be established in the truth. But if we compare ourselves among ourselves, and measure ourselves by ourselves, we are not wise: or in case we fellowship externally upon so uncertain a thing as man's feelings, inventions, or pretended revelations, we may as well pursue a Jack-with-a-lantern.

No doubt, when our Saviour came upon earth, the profest people of God were as zealous, and had a form of godliness, as well as profest christians now have; and were fond of making proselytes to their order: for it seems, 'they would compass sea and land to make one.' But let us remember, their doings were to be seen of men; and they would make void God's law by their traditions: and consequently the Saviour says; "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandment of men."

If we would have any sure rule of fellowship, or act to please God, and for our souls' benefit, for the honour of God's cause, and the peace and happiness of society, we must believe and act as the bible or God's revealed word directs us, have that for our standard of faith and practice; then let us carefully search that sacred volume each one for ourselves, with fervent prayers to God, and a devout disposition to serve him, at the event of all

things of a worldly nature, and we shall easily see what is of God, and what is of men or other beings.

But alas! how close do long traditions stick; and how pleasing to nature is worldly profit, convenience, and the applause of mankind! as also our own internal feelings that may arise from our sincerity in an error. But as the poet has it, speaking of God's revealed word:—

Thy word is everlasting Truth;
 How pure is every page!
 That holy book shall guide our youth,
 And well support our age.

This then is a sufficient standard for our external fellowship; and by attending to it, we may know who, when and what, to admit to our external communion—But aside of that, all is uncertainty and confusion.

ARGUMENTS ON BAPTISM.

THERE are few people in our part of the world, but are sensible that the article of Baptism, has been for a long time, and still is, much controverted. No doubt, many pious and learned men, have been engaged in the contest, and possibly with too much warmth of zeal.

The most conclusive arguments on that subject, that I have seen, are found in the writings of Messrs. Baldwin, and Merrills; to whose writings on that subject, I would refer my readers, in case they want a learned and elaborate discussion of the subject.

As I have noticed, that in case we leave the plain obvious meaning of scripture, on any point of the christian's faith or practice, we shall be in a state of uncertainty in our minds; as nearly all the scriptures have been more or less disputed or controverted by mankind, at one time or another. Therefore, the most I propose in the present case, on this subject, is to give some plain scriptural and reasonable ideas, concerning the institution or ordinance of Baptism, its designs, the virtue and efficacy of it, the mode of performing it, and the candidate that may receive it, &c.—and would wish to do it without any reference to party sects in religion; and by no means to prejudice any soul.

The words, Baptism, Baptist, and Baptize, all derivatives of one idea, occur many times in our scripture.—But we may notice it is not found, I think, in all the Old

Testament: and perhaps there was not a word, in all the languages in the world, that communicated just the same idea, until the mission of John the Baptist, (or dipper) was manifested to the world—And perhaps we may as well undertake to go to the land of Judea, and seek for John the Baptist's bones, as to obtain a satisfactory meaning of that word, aside from our bible:—and here our Saviour's question, he asked the Jews, is pertinent: "the Baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?" Luke xx. 4. If we admit John's mission, or Baptism, to be from heaven; we may conclude *he* knew the import and meaning of the word, as well as the mode to perform it; as also the suitable candidate for it. See Mat. iii. from 1 to 12. "He preached repentance, and baptized those that confessed their sins; and they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins," &c.

But as our Saviour and his apostles, both commanded and practised the institute of Baptism, I conclude no sober christian is disposed to dispute, but that the ordinance of water Baptism was, and is of divine authority—and I am not able as yet to learn any material distinction in the nature of things, between the words, command, ordinance, or institution: if it is of God, it is to remain; for what the Lord doeth he doth it forever, or as long as the state of things remain as when he gave the command, ordinance or institution. So saith our Saviour: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them, to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Hence, with the concurrence of many

other texts, I conclude for one, that we are not to expect another Dispensation, neither another ordinance in the place of this; or an alteration in the mode of performing it, of divine authority, so long as this world lasts; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away.

But some are pleased to say, the Baptism Christ commanded his apostles to administer, was the baptism of the spirit, and not of water, save for a temporary time—A few thoughts may correct that idea.

Do we ever read, hear or know of God's (or Christ) commanding his servants to perform impossibilities?—Now the baptism of the spirit is as unseen as the soul is, and is as much out of the power of men as creatures to perform, as it is to make a soul—therefore the baptism of the spirit is God's prerogative and his act, and no mere creature ever had that power to baptize in any other sense than as instruments, or by their teaching and acting in faith, as Christ commanded, God or Christ verified his promise to them, in a miraculous way to confirm and witness their mission: hence we find when Peter was come to Cornelius and preached to him and those with him as recorded Acts 10. "the Holy Ghost fell on them as on the apostles at the day of Pentecost." What was this but spiritual baptism? and still Peter says in the close, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," &c.

I presume to think, that no rational creature in his sober senses, (unless he be carried away with enthusiastic or fanatical notions) will say, that the baptism St. Peter in the name of the Lord, commanded Cornelius and

those with him after they had received the Holy Ghost, was any other than water baptism. St. Peter could not be so ignorant of his mission or his Master's will, as to think because Cornelius and those with him had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, there was no need of their submitting to water baptism. Now the ordinary abilities of man, may enable him to perform water baptism; whereas spiritual baptism is utterly out of his power to perform or communicate: therefore as a visible ordinance in the visible church of Christ, Water Baptism was, and is, the baptism that Christ commanded his servants to teach and administer; and this will more fully appear, if we consider the manifest design of the institution:—And in case I bring forward any idea that may be new to any one, I beg them to thoroughly compare scripture, and the nature of things, before they adopt or reject those ideas, &c.

Altho' God has a right to command, or institute ordinances for his creatures to subject to, and it may be sufficient for man to know that thus, God has commanded, and our duty is to obey yet; in most, if not all his requirements, we may discover his design, and the consistency and reasonableness of the requirement—And such is evidently the design of all the visible institutions and commands or ordinances of God, that they connect the declarative glory of God, with the happiness of the willing and obedient soul.

What were the modes of worship for Adam, in his state of innocency, is not ascertained clearly in scripture, and is out of the power of man now to ascertain. We have no reason to doubt, but that, as he was God's creature and made good, altho' a natural man, and in the natural world, he might live in open vision with his Ma-

ker.—Be that as it may, it is evident, that when he sinned, he could only hear the voice of the Lord God, in the garden: and hence, to hear and obey the voice of the Lord, constitutes the principal external happiness of creatures, as they cannot see God, only by an eye of faith, and live, in this earthly tabernacle. Therefore, as visible religion or external worship, was, and still is necessary in this temporal state of things; in order that man may serve to declare the glory of God his Maker, and act for the benefit and instruction of his posterity; as also for the edification of his equals. So God, in mercy to his creature man, has not only given him his law as a rule of life, but also external forms or institutions for him to manifest his love, faith and duty in, to his God. Now the most of christians suppose that the ordinances and ceremonies of worship, in the old or former Dispensation was typical, and no doubt the tabernacle and its vessels and even the land of Canaan, all were in a certain degree typical—And in case we can happily see the end and design of those types and shadows, and rightly apply them to the gospel Dispensation, it may afford us great consolation, and stability of mind: whereas a misapplication of those ceremonies or ordinances may hurt us. The question then is, if water Baptism is an ordinance of God, and to be perpetuated in his millient church; and if it was not instituted in the former Dispensation; and some of those former ordinances are done away, as to form: Which of the former institutions does baptism succeed in the place of? &c.

(I shall give my judgment, only as a man, who trusts he has obtained grace to be found faithful; but not pretending to any immediate revelation, save what is revealed in the scriptures.)

I answer. Not in the place of circumcision; but, if in the place of any former ordinance, it is in the place of Sacrifices.

As I profess to be a reasonable creature, and as the apostles tell us "to give a reason," &c, I will first shew, how it could not come in place of circumcision, and then the propriety of it's coming in the place of the law of sacrifices; and leave it for men to judge.

God had servants that no doubt understood the method God had ordained as an external mode of worship and dedicating themselves to God in an acceptable order, long before circumcision was introduced into the world; and if circumcision was essential to salvation, those that did without it, must be lost, or God has altered his terms of acceptance. The scriptures give us two ideas as to the design or meaning of circumcision; viz. "they are debtors to do the whole law;" Gal. v. 3. "and a seal of the righteousness of faith." Rom. iv. 11.

It will not be disputed but that those who are baptized are debtors to do God's will, even in the gospel Dispensation, as all mankind that hear of the gospel have an evident duty to perform; i. e. to obey it. Not that doing duty, or the law, can justify a soul at the bar of God, (as the nature of law is to condemn the sinner; and duty we owe to God as being his creatures, owing all we have and are to him: and where is the mortal that ever and always did his duty? for in many things we all offend, and verily are unprofitable servants when we have done that which was our duty to do—Therefore duty can never merit.) but the least omission or transgression of God's holy law, brings condemnation or death.

Hence, if mankind are justified at the bar of God, it must be by faith in the atonement Christ has made, for

the believing soul—Hence, the just live by Faith. “But without Faith, it is impossible to please him;” Heb. xi. 6. “And Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe though they be not circumcised,” &c. Now the covenant that God made with Abraham, to which the seal of circumcision was affixed, as in Gen. xvii. 10, had a reference to temporal good, and greatness, i. e. the land of Canaan and also of the seed of Jesus Christ who was made of Abraham’s lineage, according to the flesh; hence the seal was to be in their flesh, &c. Observe, a seal is something visible, that the man-child carried with him through life: and as that covenant, on God’s part, was fully completed and fulfilled when he had brought Abraham’s posterity into the enjoyment of the land of Canaan; and after Christ was brought forward and commenced a new Dispensation, and new modes, signs, &c. that seal was at an end—as abundant texts plainly manifest—And as the natural heirs of Abraham received that temporal good and land of Canaan, which was a type no doubt of Heaven, so the true spiritual heirs of Abraham’s faith, or those that are the children of God by faith, unto whom the better promise is made, and spiritual and eternal good is promised in the covenant—are sealed in another way, as saith the apostle, Epi. i. 13. “After that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance,” &c. And iv. 30. “And grieve not the holy spirit of promise whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption;” compared with II. Cor. i. 22. and Rom. viii. 16, with many other texts—Implying, not only a real

satisfaction to the soul, that has the seal, of the new covenant; but likewise a visible appearance to our fellow mortals, that we are heaven-bound, by our deportment and daily conduct, and are sealed in their forehead as the servants of God. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his," &c. But water baptism confers no grace, and is no visible mark on the creature: therefore it could not be designed to take place in the new Dispensation instead of circumcision by any means, as Faith ever was a prerequisite for Baptism—But circumcision was ordered to be forced on all males of Abraham's household, and even on the child eight days old, who is utterly incapable of acting in faith; and I know of none, even the least colour of a command in all the bible, to administer water baptism before there is a manifestation of faith; consequently could not succeed in the gospel dispensation in place of circumcision.

Now, that water baptism succeeded in the church, in place of sacrifices, I think is evident, if we consider their designs and the candidates. Sacrifices were as early as Adam's time; and we are informed in scripture who was to bring their offering, and what they were to bring, and how, &c.—and it is worthy of notice, that Abel brought the firstling of his flock, and was accepted, in preference to Cain, who brought the fruit of his own labour, or of the earth, &c.

Now as blood is the life of the flesh, so we are told, "It is the blood that maketh atonement, and without the shedding of blood there is no remissions of sins," &c.—And, it appears to me that the great Jehovah informed Adam and his, sons, after the fall, something like this:

“Adam, you, by your transgression of my holy and righteous law, have forfeited your life, your all; and the law calls life for life; your God has found out a way; the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head; mine anointed shall come in the fulness of time, in a visible body, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and rise victorious over death, hell or the grave, in order for your relief. Now, Adam, if you believe my promise of grace, and wish to be saved from everlasting destruction, do you renounce the dictates of that serpent that has deceived your wife; and also all dependance on any thing you can do, to merit my favour, and as a testimony that you confide in my gracious promise of salvation, &c. do you take that innocent lamb, and offer it up, thus and so, as an emblem of my promised Saviour, and as a manifestation of your faith, in my salvation, &c. and thereby you will prove that you resolve to accept of my offered grace, and also teach your posterity the way of acceptance before your God.”

Thus, it seems that sacrifices was introduced into the old world. And it is worthy of notice that nearly all nations of the earth, have from the earliest times we have account of them, had a notion of appeasing their deities with vicarious sacrifices; and by the way, it is a good argument for the truth and validity of our scriptures;—and here we might notice the price of our redemption, and the malignant nature of sin, as it seems to require the Creator to humble himself as it were to save the poor lost creature; as is abundantly evident by our account of the humiliation and sufferings of Christ.

Again, when God introduced the law of sacrifices by Moses, we may observe it is entirely distinct from the

moral law of God, or the ten Precepts in the decalogue, —not a word of sacrifices in that law. Therefore, the law of sacrifices had the nature of a standing ordinance in the visible worship of God, and was attached to the service of the sanctuary or tabernacle of the congregation. Now as all those sacrifices were emblematical or typical of the great sacrifice of Christ's body, which alone could take away sin, so it was to continue in God's visible worship until the antitype came and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross, &c. And we should ever remember, that there is no requirements in all the law of sacrifices, for any person to offer such sacrifices only as an evidence of their faith, and a manifestation of their obedience to God.

The sacrifice of the Passover had reference to Israel as a nation's deliverance out of Egyptian bondage; and all the first-born males were sanctified or set apart to God, and was to be redeemed by a Lamb, &c. and as all the visible Israelites eat that sacrifice, so, I conceive, the Lord's Supper succeeded in place of that sacrifice, and is designed for all professors or the true spiritual Israelites to partake of, as emblematical of their deliverance from sin, or that worse than Egyptian bondage, by the sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God, &c.—But observe, the infant did not offer that sacrifice, nor the parent for the child in particular, (for it would be absurd to suppose the first child of a parent, and a male only, was to be favoured of God to the exclusion of all others) but rather as a general idea; as all the first-born in Egypt were slain in the nation, so the first-born of Israel were set apart to God.

All the other sacrifices, had reference to national sins,

or to individual pollutions, and were brought at the cost of the nation, or the individual, that was capable of acting in faith; and I conclude no rational mind can suppose that all or any of the sacrifices offered by any in the former dispensation, had any virtue or did any good to those that offered them, other than continuing their visible standing in the church, unless offered in faith.—Now as true justifying faith, or spiritual devotion is as unseen to mortals, as the soul is, in case there then was a propriety of men's external actions, to manifest to God and their fellow mortals and the rising generations their faith; so it still remains consistent and necessary in the gospel dispensation, that mankind should manifest their faith by external acts of devotion, or dedicating of themselves to God; as man is still in the flesh, and the state of things in the visible world, are not materially altered from what they were in the legal dispensation.

Now as all those sacrifices were to be living creatures, (those offerings, consecrations, &c. that had not life, were not called sacrifices) and were to be perfect or sound without blemish, and brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and there offered to the Lord, and must be slain, and the blood sprinkled on the altar and within the veil, to atone for sin, (for although we read of animals being offered alive, and remaining so for the service of the priests and Levites, &c. yet they were not called *sacrifices*, but *offerings*.) How forcibly did they represent the offering of Jesus Christ, once for all!—And as all those sacrifices thus slain, prefigured the great antitype in his death, &c. until he made his offering of his own body, once in the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself—So, when he had

risen from the dead, and all power in heaven and in earth committed to him, and another dispensation and order of worship commences, he tells his disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; [I conclude all men must understand those every creatures here spoken of, is, rational intelligences capable of hearing, understanding and believing as the gospel was to be preached among all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. i. 5, & xvi. 26.] he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. with Matth. Luke, &c.

Now as the Israelites were to bring their sacrifices to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation alive, for God's priest to slay, and offer and make an atonement for the soul according to the law, which could not be efficacious to the soul, unless offered in faith, as before stated—So the believing penitent soul, that receiveth the glad tidings of the gospel, may with propriety come to the congregation of God's people, and there profess their faith before God, and to his people, and present their body as a living sacrifice, for God's authorized minister of the gospel to do with it according to the ordinance of the gospel by baptizing such according to the commission Christ has given.

Hence we find Ananias saith to Paul, Acts xxii. 16. "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" or as Peter preached, Acts ii. 38. "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, &c.

Now Baptism, by immersion, perhaps is as emblematical of Christ's death and resurrection, as killing the living sacrifice of old, and more so, as that only shewed his death and sufferings; but this, as the body cannot live under water, shews his dying and rising again.— Hence saith the apostle: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life;" Rom. vi. 4.— and, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" &c.— "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. Therefore, as here is a lively representation of the death and resurrection of Christ, in this ordinance by way of plunging, I conclude that Baptism succeeded in place of Sacrifices, and both as a manifestation of the faith, in the candidate. More scriptures might be cited, and much more said, but our limits will not admit of it at present.

But let none be so ignorant, as to think baptism by water is the putting away of the filth of the flesh, or atones for sin. St. Peter informs us, in his first Epistle, iii. 21, to the contrary; it saves the believing soul the guilt of conscience for the neglect; but, only being a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is still Jesus Christ only can take away our sins, by his power and the virtue of his doings: or as saith John; "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, while we walk in the light (of his word) as he is in the light." So he not only gave his command for water baptism, but also gave us the precedent by subjecting himself to it, to fulfil all righteousness, and we shall have no cause of shame when we have a due respect to all his commandments.

The virtue and efficacy of water baptism, therefore, is like the virtue and efficacy of keeping the other positive commands and institutions of the great Jehovah, or Head of his church.

As he has promised to reward the evil doer, so there is a reward for the righteous and in keeping of his directions there is great reward, Psalms xix. 11.

As to the mode of performing Baptism, scripture informs us of but one mode. John baptized where there was *much water*. Jesus Christ, it appears by comparing the Evangelists together, was baptized in the river of Jordan—And we read, Acts viii. 38, of Philip baptizing the Eunuch in a certain water, that they, “went down into the water, and that they came up out of the water;” and as the act of baptizing is compared to burying, in several places, it is evident that the mode was by laying the body under water, as near in the position we bury them, as may be. Now the method of burying is familiar; I know of no people that bury with the face downwards; much less to sprinkle a little earth on the face, or pour it on while the body is standing, and call such a procedure burying the dead—And it is thought that were it not for the inventions and subtle arguments, and selfish interest of uninspired men, mankind would now be at no more loss in their minds respecting the mode of baptism, than they are as to the mode of burying their fellow mortals.—And the only safe way that I know of, for man now to attain the truth, in this particular, is, to lay aside creatures’ direction, and attend to divine Revelation as recorded in our bible. ‘By attending to that with fervent prayer, and a disposition to obey the truth, let it cost us what it may, we may see the fitness of

things, and be established in this as well as all other points of religion.

Now, as to the suitable Candidate for this ordinance—We know that also is a matter much controverted. But let us still adhere to scripture, and keep in view the character of God and the accountability of his creature man. If it has pleased God through the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; and if the gospel was preached among all nations, for the obedience of faith; and if, “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, and so faith cometh by hearing, and hearing, by the word of God;” (Rom. x. 17.) and if the word of faith which we preach, is nigh thee, that thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved—I say, if the apostle was correct in such like ideas, and that without faith it is impossible to please him:—then certainly a fair inference must suppose that a suitable candidate for baptism, must be an adult person; one capable of hearing and understanding the doctrine taught; and also of speaking to confess the Lord Jesus; and consequently, that has a firm belief in God, Christ, &c. or they are not candidates for baptism according to God’s appointment: and if we peruse the doctrines and practice of Christ and his apostles, we cannot find the least intimation or practice otherwise. Repentance and faith, ever were first called for by John, by Jesus Christ, and by all his disciples that scripture gives us any account of: as John baptized them that confessed their sins; so when the Samaritans believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men

and women—But we read of no children or infants being admitted.

So also, Philip to the Eunuch: "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." So when Lydia's heart was opened, and she attended to the doctrine preached, she was baptized.

As to Lydia's household it is no more likely that she had any in her family but adults, than it is for merchants that go abroad for the purpose of trade and commerce, and only have a family of servants. So also as to the Jailor's family; the apostles spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house, &c.

Now, can any candid mind think, that had our Lord designed that baptism should be performed against any one's will, or to infants, that both he and his apostles should never give us such an idea in command, nor leave us any account of such a practice in all the Book of God?

As to the degree of Faith, previously requisite to the ordinance of baptism; I conclude, the scriptures leave that to the conscience of the candidate. The Eunuch professed to believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Peter preached baptism to them that were pricked in their hearts, and enquired what they must do—(Acts, ii. 38, &c.)—as well as to Cornelius, who had received the Holy Ghost. So also Paul at Ephesus, (Acts xix. 1, 2, and on) to those that had been baptized unto John's baptism, and had not heard of the Holy Ghost; as they were baptized again in the name of the Lord Jesus, and Paul laid hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost; that scripture requires an acknowledgment of faith in Christ, previous to their subjecting to baptism—All which evidently proves that those in the

primitive days of the gospel, acted in that ordinance to manifest their faith in the divine Saviour, and thereby visibly to put on Christ; and thereby, in the appointed way and order of the great Shepherd of his sheep, enter into the visible church or kingdom of God, to be yoked under his government, and to be disciplined by his laws, and learn of him by precept and precedent, that their yoke might be easy, and their burthen light.

But, perhaps, some enquiring mind may ask if baptism was designed only for believers, and such as voluntarily professed their faith in the divine Saviour, from whence came the practice so familiar and so general in the christian part of the world, of sprinkling infants and calling it Baptism? while charity must allow that many pious souls are in the practice of no other mode, &c.—I will try to inform such minds, how I understand, Pedobaptism was introduced into the church of Christ; and I hope no one will be offended at the truth:—

When God gave his law by his faithful servant Moses, and also the form of the tabernacle, and also the mode of his worship, he charged him to see that he made all things according to the pattern shewn him in the mount: [Heb. viii. 5, compared with Exod. xxv. 40, & xxvi. 30, & xxvii. 8. and Numb. viii. 4, and Acts, vii. 44.] and Moses was very cautious to charge the people of God, not to add, alter or diminish from God's commandments and institutions. So also in the close of divine Revelation, as also in many places in our new Testament, we have the most solemn and awful warnings, about adding or taking away any part contained in the sacred word; and yet we can read but small portions of the scriptures without complaints of man's assuming to alter or take away, &c. God's precepts. Even when our

Lord came on earth, there were many zealous people, and some that seemed to trust in themselves that they were righteous and despised others, &c. But how did the divine Saviour reprove and warn them, "that they made void God's law by their tradition; but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Mat. xv. 9.

It seems that man has ever been fond and full of inventions, and in almost every age of the world have undertaken, from some motive or other, to make innovations on God's laws, and his institutions or ordinances: hence the real cause of all the errors in the world is in the devil, or man's propensity to evil, or adhering to the devil's insinuations, (or mistaking the devil's suggestions, or their own fancy or selfish interest, for the light of God's spirit or word) and many times, I conclude, innovations are made in God's established order of things from good motives, in the inventor of such innovations.

Now as Pedobaptism is not found in divine Revelation we must look for its source elsewhere; and a slight acquaintance with ancient Ecclesiastical history, will inform us of its introduction.—

It is plain in scripture, that in the apostles days, there were teachers in the church that taught a different doctrine from that the apostles taught; and who held that circumcision was essential to salvation;—and Mosheim and other historians inform us, that after the apostles' days, many absurd doctrines and practices were soon introduced into the christian church; and that as the christian religion became established into a systematical form as to order and government, &c. real miracles, together with immediate inspiration ceased. And such

an account seems reasonable; for after God had established his law and the order of worship in a miraculous manner by Moses, the affairs of religion were carried on in an ordinary way and without miracles; as the people had that system to inform them in most, if not all important affairs of life, so likewise as to the gospel dispensation: but saith St. Peter; "there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you," &c.

Man from some motive, is apt to set himself up—and when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the priesthood ceased, the bishops in the christian church it seems transferred the priest's office to themselves; and by continued innovations in power, finally produced a pope,—who claims a right to infallibility, and to make and alter laws &c, for the church. Man, from ignorance or selfishness is capable of doing much evil.

Now when the idea of circumcision is allowed as essential to salvation; and when we admit that water baptism succeeded in the christian church, in place of circumcision in the old church; it is but natural to infer, that water baptism also is essential to salvation—Which doctrine, it is evident, by history, was absolutely admitted in the church as a scripture doctrine—(and it is evident by history that many ideas or doctrines on many points of the christian religion have at one time been voted out as Heresy, when at other periods such doctrines were allowed as orthodox, or true—Such was the case of the idea of Predestination; when first introduced, it was called Heresy; but now it is popular; as also the doctrine or word Trinity: Mosheim informs us, that Theophilus of Antioch, was the first inventor of that

word, about 161 years after Christ.)—and was a very universal idea in what was then called the orthodox or true christian church. About the same time, which was near the end of the second century, the notion of praying towards the east, and using the sign of the cross, was introduced in the christian church; and superstition was apparent then in many particulars—from the idea that water baptism was essential to salvation.

Natural affections would wish to procure happiness for our children: and if they were circumcised of old, and baptism by water, succeeded in the new covenant as a seal, to their eternal felicity, by all means baptize them, and save a multitude of souls. But to plunge a weak, sickly infant, all over in water, might not be convenient, if not endanger its life: hence to sprinkle the face and say the words, may do as well; only have a vote of the church or the pope, to sanction it for baptism;—and let such child have godfather and godmother, that shall promise it shall be a christian—and all is safe. Such in short appears to be the source of Pedobaptism, towards the last of the second century—And we may here notice at least two benevolent purposes that the inventor might have in view; viz. the salvation of the infant, and the increase of the church. Whether such were the motives of the introducers of Pedobaptism, or rather lucre, (as I expect they then received a fee for baptizing infants, and in case they lived, would naturally add to the incomes of the bishops' salary,) is a matter out of my province to judge. But as use, or custom and habit, becomes second nature, “as their fathers did, so do they to this day.”

No doubt the Protestant sects had just cause of separating from the Romish church; but what a pity it is that

they still retain so many errors, practised by them; and perhaps no one sect is entirely clear of some error in faith or practice.—Now, a little reason, with attending to the scriptures, may free us from such absurdities, if we will let the cunning and sophistical writings of man alone. In the first place, it is as much out of the power of man or any body of men, as creatures, to confer grace or salvation on the soul of the infant, by all they can do to it, as it is for them to make a soul; and as all acts of creatures, in order to please God, must be done in faith, (as “whatsoever is not of faith, is sin,” Rom. xiv. 23.) the infant nor ideot, in the nature of things, cannot act in faith: and as to parents acting in faith, in such cases, for their children; faith cannot be transferred, any more than joy or sorrow, pain or misery; such, being mere personal things, must be borne or suffered by the single individual.

Again, the promise made by the sponsors, or god-parents so called, is such as is utterly out of their power to fulfil; as young people, when come to adult years, may commit thousands of sins, entirely beyond the reach of their guardians’ care and knowledge; as, “he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, commits adultery” &c. All such proceedings may, possibly, be thought of by sober Deists, as impositions on the human understanding, and no advantage to the cause of true christianity; for, as man is a reasonable being, he must have some colour of reason in the proposition proposed to him, or he is not bound either to believe or obey.

Thus I have given my ideas of the source of Pedobaptism, briefly, and as modestly or charitably as the nature of the subject would admit of.

I have been a thinking mortal, over fifty years; and have read many histories, ancient and modern; and have seen and heard, perhaps, in substance, all that can be said on the subject; and if I could find it in my bible, I think I should be glad to embrace the idea.—But, ‘what that is wanting, cannot be numbered?’ I freely own I am personally acquainted with many that hold to Pedobaptism; and greatly respect them, as christians in error; and it is not for me to judge how many and how great errors a person may hold, and yet meet the approbation of God—as all mankind are failable. But if the Pedobaptists would lay aside all they cannot bring a Thus saith the Lord for, and unite with their fellow christians in the plain obvious meaning of the written scriptures; what a happiness it would be to the christian cause, and the souls and bodies of men.

ARGUMENTS ON THE SABBATH.

THE article of the Sabbath, has been less controverted, in late publications, than that of Baptism. Not because it is less essential to the happiness of mankind; but rather because professors of christianity have by some means or other, more generally neglected attending to this solemn command of God: yet there has been advocates for the Sabbath of the Lord, perhaps, in every age—I have seen the writings of several authors on that subject; as Bamfield, who wrote several hundred years ago—His books are very scarce: I know of only one or two now extant. He was particular as to the time and means used to introduce the change of the Sabbath: and it may suffice to say, that it consisted in artifice and man's inventions;—not the least colour of any divine authority for it.

Also, George Carlow, who wrote about 200 years ago—his book was re-printed in 1802—some of those I have by me to dispose of;—in which he writes in answer to Mr. Ward, who had written for the first-day sabbath: and it is thought, that any serious person who is willing the bible should be the standard of truth, must confess, when he has read Carlow, that he has not only entirely refuted Mr. Ward, but also answered all objections commonly brought against the seventh-day sabbath, so fully that there can be no hesitation in any mind, that is really disposed to practise truth in that case, what day of

the week is the christian sabbath. I could wish every real christian, would read his book, as it is neither large nor costly.

I have also seen some of the writings of several others, on that subject, both for and against the seventh-day sabbath:—and if the reader pleases, he may judge, that it is not merely tradition, or worldly interest, that disposes me to make some observations on the Sabbath: however, as I have often observed in other cases, so also in this, if our bible does not plainly point out the day, it is in vain for us to look for stability of mind from any other source.

But, says one, my Catechism teaches me that the seventh day was the sabbath of the Lord from the beginning of the world, until the resurrection of Christ, and from that time, the first day is the christian sabbath—or words to that effect.

But pray, dear friend, who made your Catechism? I answer: The Assembly of Divines, or Synod, or Council, or Pope; no matter who; if it is not of God, it will not stand, in the burning Day.

Now if all assemblies of divines, were actuated purely by the divine Spirit of God, they would act agreeable to the divine command of God; or we may conclude that God is altered in his nature or moral character; or else the law of the sabbath was only given for a *part* of time; which we will consider more of by and by. But, perhaps, the dear child may ask in what verse in the bible, may I find the command for the first-day sabbath? I would answer: in the very next verse to where you have a command for infant baptism. But, alas! neither are to be found in all the book of God.

But did not our glorious Saviour rise on the first day of the week? and are not the works of Redemption greater than the works of Creation? Dear child, and what old mother learned you to reason so? Observe, if you would seek for truth in this case, that God has not seen fit to leave on record in our bible, the precise time the divine Saviour did arise from the dead; as you may see in all the Evangelists:—for when they came to the sepulchre early, even as it began to dawn towards the first of the week, or while it was yet dark, (observe, the word *day* is supplied in every case where the first day of the week is spoken of, as all our learned men say those words in *Italics* in our bible, are not found in the original, and it is doubtful.) and he was then risen and gone—But how long he had been risen and gone, is not left on record. Some have stated, that he was crucified on the sixth day of the week, laid in the sepulchre that evening, and rose first-day morning. But what will man try to do, to make out his own fancy or tenet!

The prophet Daniel speaks, or rather the angel to Daniel, ix. 26, 27, about the Messiah being cut off, and the sacrifice and oblation, to cease in the midst of the week. And our Lord said, Mat. xii. 40, in answer to those that wanted a sign; “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of Man, be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Now any person may know, that the middle of the week is fourth-day; and we have scripture that tells us, he was put into the sepulchre in the evening, (Mat. xxvii. 57.) and would it not be more agreeable to those scriptures, to conclude he arose from the dead in the evening?

And as for the works of Redemption being greater than the works of Creation; all reason teaches, that it takes more wisdom, and generally more cost, to invent or construct and build a fabrick or any machinery at first, than to repair such building when out of order.— But why should the day the Saviour arose, be set apart as a weekly Sabbath, any more than the day of his birth, when the glad tidings of great joy to all people was proclaimed? or the day of his death, when the great atonement for sin was made, [and on the day of atonement in the old dispensation, no work was to be done, Lev. xvi. 29, 30.] by the express command of God? or any more than the day of his ascension? for the Holy Ghost, it seems, was not given in the same degree, until after his ascension, and he told his disciples that it was expedient for them that he should go away, in order that he might send them the Comforter, &c.

I hope I as much value the doings and sufferings, resurrection, ascension and intercession of the glorious Saviour, as any man. But let us have his or God's command, for observing either of them as a Sabbath, and then we may be warranted in so doing.

Now, it is a universal maxim, that a law must be published or known, or it cannot be binding; for where there is no law, there is no transgression, &c. Again, it takes the same power or authority to alter, or abrogate a law, as it does to make it, and the same publicity. These maxims are so universal, that I need not dwell on the idea.

As the seventh day of the week (not a seventh day) was ordained and constituted by God himself, at creation (Gen. ii. 3.) blessed and sanctified of God, or hallowed

as a sabbath of rest: as also it is evident, before the giving the ten Precepts, it was called the Lord's Sabbath, and observed as such by the willing and knowing and obedient people of God. See Exod. xvi. 22 to 30.— Hence, in the Decalogue it is commanded, by way of remembrance, as a thing that had ever been enjoined on man. Therefore, when a whole nation of six or seven hundred thousand grown men, shall be arraigned before God, and shall hear his awful voice, and he write, himself, even on stone that cannot rot or be burnt, that it is his holy will that the first day of the week should be observed as an holy Sabbath, in place of the seventh, man may be warranted in observing it as such.

It is needless, in the present age of the world, to cite the numerous scriptures that enjoin the observation of the seventh day as a holy Sabbath, commanded and set apart to holy uses by God himself: Neither is it necessary to cite all the blessings God has promised to those who duly observe it. All I shall here observe on that point, is, that there is no one command in all the scriptures, it is thought, has so repeated and great and universal promises of blessings annexed to the true observation of it, as the command for the seventh-day Sabbath has. See Isaiah, 56th chapter in particular. And perhaps no one command, in all the bible, is more complained of, or heavier punishments inflicted on the transgressor, than that on the seventh-day sabbath-breaker hath. Death was the portion of the wilful breaker of the seventh-day sabbath, as well as for the idolater, or the adulterer: and I would here ask all candid readers, if in case polygamy or adultery, had been as long and as universally practised and encouraged and commanded, by professed kings, emperors, popes, and professed

ministers of the gospel, as the first day for a sabbath has been; would it now be called a less crime? I have no hesitation in my mind, in such a case, to suppose some people would be so far from calling it a crime, that it would be considered a virtuous act, to have a number of wives.

Again; admit the most barbarous savage, that never heard of our bible, or of Christ and Divine Revelation, could be learned the English language, and let him read our bible all thro', and he shall never hear a word of man's comment on it, and let him admit it to be of divine authority; would he be at any, even the least doubt in his mind which day of the week the Lord had appointed as a Sabbath for his people? Surely he could not. And it seems evident from a number of scriptures, that the law of the Sabbath, was ever considered as the criterion to distinguish between the worshippers of God and idolaters. See Exod. xxxi. 12 to 17. and Ezek. xx. 13 to 20. It is called a sign between the Lord and his people forever, and commanded to be kept throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. And it is observable, that breaking the Sabbath seems an outlet to all other sins and vices; as most of the criminals that have been put to death, who have given a confession, or recounted how they were led astray, begin with noticing the breach or neglect of the Sabbath as the first cause of their going astray.

Now as relates to criminals, in case they knew of no other Sabbath than the first day, the idea will equally hold good. What the Sabbath is a sign of, I purpose to consider farther on, by and by.

Now, can any christian person even think, that in case of such importance, had God or Christ, or any of his

Divine missionaries, contemplated a change or the least alteration in the observation of the Sabbath, or fourth Command in the Decalogue, that some one of them would not have given and at least left on record some positive and plain account of the same? Surely it would be uncharitable if not impious to tax any of them with such indifference and neglect. But, says one, example speaks louder than words; and have we no example of the practice of good servants of God, as changing the observation of the seventh to the first day of the week as a sabbath, or of their neglect in observing the seventh day of the week as a sacred day of rest, &c.? I answer positively; no such example is to be found in our bible. All account of good servants of God, aside of that, is uncertain. As to example, I conclude all good servants of God, will have their example, so far as their weak nature admits, correspond with their faith, and the commandments of God. Let us see the example of the good ones of old, in this case, as recorded in our bible: And first, see the example of God himself, Gen. ii. 2 & 3, compared with other texts, where a reason is given for the fourth Command. He rested and was refreshed. Exod. xxxi. 17. He also blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, or made it holy to the Lord. (Now let us always remember, it is God that sanctifies, and he alone has a right to say what is holy, or unholy, clean, common or unclean, and not man.) And I conclude, no christian will doubt, but that all saints of God, before the coming of Christ, did mean to observe the seventh day as the sabbath of the Lord; as is sufficiently evident from scripture. And if our Lord Christ, is to be followed in example or command, let us see clearly that he has given any toleration to neglect the sabbath: and as he was

made under the law, and came to fulfil the law, let us be careful how we, as christians, admit the idea of his breaking the law, even of the sabbath. (For altho' he was accused of so doing, remember it was the superstitious hypocrites that accused him, and had no foundation in the command of God, or right reason for such an accusation; as it ever was lawful to do well on the sabbath day, and as mercy is before judgment, so acts of mercy and of real necessity, as real necessity knows no law, was consistent with the command of God and all reason:—hence the incest of Lot with his daughters, is not complained of.) The idea of Christ's breaking any part of God's law, would spoil the atonement he came to make. Therefore he came not to destroy or dissolve the law, but to fulfil; and the fulfilling of a typical law by the antitype's appearance, naturally dissolves such a law, but not of a moral law, as has been observed.—Therefore I need not be particular as to all the examples of Jesus Christ: it may be sufficient to observe, that he was subject to his parents until of age; and when he entered on his ministry, we read repeatedly of his going into the synagogue on the sabbath, and attending the public worship on God's stated day of worship; that this was his manner of example—and we have no account of his doing or allowing any act of labour on the sabbath, but acts of mercy or real necessity, in all the course of his ministry, so far as scripture gives us account of his example; and he rested in his tomb on the seventh-day sabbath, as is evident. And although he did cures, and no doubt preached as occasion served, every day in the week; we have no account of his calling an assembly for mere public worship, or of his attending any assembly

merely for worship, on any other day of the week, than the Lord's seventh-day Sabbath.

As to Christ's doctrines or commands, of a moral nature, it would be absurd to suppose he ever taught any thing contrary to what, of that nature in substance, had been commanded before; for if he and his Father were and are one, (not *two*) and if he was the giver of the law, as is evident by various scriptures (as he was the Rock that followed Israel, 1 Cor. x. 4.) and God created all things by Jesus Christ: and he is before all things, and by him all things exist, &c. We must suppose him imperfect, or the natural moral obligation of man altered, to admit of any need of any new moral precepts: he therefore taught, in his sermon on the mount, and elsewhere, like this: "Whosoever shall break one of the least Commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven," &c. (I conclude all sober christians will allow, he here had reference to the moral law, or ten Precepts.) And he goes on to explain the true force and spiritual meaning of that law, in order that mankind might not be ignorant of it, or try to evade God's law; and closes that discourse, with likening the hearer and doer of his doctrine, to a wise man that built his house on a rock, &c. But they that heard and did not do, to the foolish man that built on the sand, (of creature doctrines perhaps) whose house fell and great was the fall of it, &c.

As Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and as righteousness is, in keeping God's law, and sin the transgression of that law, so he had no occasion to reprove the people of Israel for not observing the law of the Sabbath, as they kept that, even to a

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superstition; which I conceive is, the only case a man can be superstitious in keeping God's law, i. e. when he pays so great stress and attention to some one precept, as to overlook or neglect some other of equal importance, which was then evidently the case with the Scribes and Pharisees, in the article of the sabbath:—and he tells the multitude as well as his disciples, Mat. xxiii. 2, 3. “The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.”—Intimating as Moses a faithful servant of God, gave them God's law, and they, the Scribes, taught agreeable to Moses' doctrine, so the people should do. I presume no one will think that the Scribes or Pharisees neglected teaching the seventh day as the Sabbath of the Lord: it fairly results then, that Christ did command or teach as well as practise the seventh-day Sabbath;—and when all power in heaven and earth was his, and he was about to withdraw his bodily presence from his disciples, he tells the apostles to go and preach, &c. thro'out the world, and to teach the people to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them, “and lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Amen.”

Consequently, they must teach God's law and the seventh-day sabbath; for he commanded them so to do, as before stated: and as it is inconsistent to expect that the divinely inspired apostles of our Lord, should teach any thing they had not received in command from Christ—So we, in perusing their writings, can find no shadow of a command for any other sabbath than the seventh day in all their writings in our bibles, and there could be no

propriety in their commanding the observation of the seventh-day sabbath, as God himself had so expressly commanded that, from the beginning of time, and in giving his law, as before stated; which law, as God is one perfect being, is one perfect system of morality, and was equally given to, and binding on, all mankind as the scriptures testify. The stranger or heathen in case they would become God's people (and all had that privilege who heard of God's law) were equally held to the observation of the Lord's holy sabbath, and had equal privileges with the home-born Israelite, in case they were proselytes of the covenant, or really wholly gave themselves to serve the true God. And here I may observe that the epithet of the Jews' Sabbath, or Jewish Sabbath is not found in all the bible: it is of much later date. The seventh-day Sabbath, is ever in the bible, called the Lord's Sabbath, the Lord's day of rest, holy to the Lord, &c.—but man has undertaken to change names, as well as laws and times. How such conduct will stand at God's bar of account, is for those to see to it, who practise so to do.

If therefore the immediate disciples and apostles of our Lord, never taught any other sabbath by word, let us see if we can find any example of theirs that may look like their practising the observation of any other day as a sabbath.—

It is noted of them when our Saviour lay in his tomb; "they rested the Sabbath day, according to the Commandment." Luke xxiii. 56. It is also noted that they attended meetings with the congregations, wherever they went to preach, on the Sabbath day: (and we have not the least idea, in all the scripture, of any other day

of the week as being called a Sabbath, or weekly Sabbath, by any people that professed God or Christ, except the seventh day) as Christ's manner was. So it is recorded of Paul, who travelled and preached most of all the apostles—[See Acts xvii. 2. compared with Acts ix. 20. and 13th chapter generally.]—and indeed the whole account we have of their example; as it is not found on record, that they any of them, met on any other day of the week stately for worship, than on the Lord's seventh-day sabbath—True, as they made preaching their business every day, (where circumstances admitted, no doubt there were assemblies convened on other days of the week occasionally, even as it is common now for the circuit preachers to attend lectures when and where they can find hearers;) we have account of their assembling once at Troas on the first of the week [observe the word *day* is in Italics, and supplied] to break bread, where Paul preached. I think we find no other place in all the account of the apostles' example, of preaching being attended to on the first of the week; as the meeting of the disciples, as recorded in John xx. 19, compared with Luke xxiv. 36, &c. was not an ordinary assembly of the people to worship, and hear preaching; but rather a few of the leading characters had got together, it appears, for fear of the Jews, in a private order to consult on the affairs then passing relative to the rising of the Saviour and the cause of christianity, and Jesus appeared among them. So again after eight days they were assembled in like manner, and no doubt for like purposes, when our Lord again met with them. Now some people insist this meeting was on the first day of the week, and infer it was to intimate

it should be kept as a sabbath—when nothing is more absurd: for observe, it was after eight days from the first meeting, and could not be on the first day of the week, unless it was fourteen days after the first meeting: that if our Saviour's being seen or meeting with a portion of his disciples after his resurrection, could constitute a sabbath, without any command of his, they then had a sabbath forty days together, as he was seen of them that space of time, Acts i. 3. So in like manner, when they were a fishing, John xxi. 4. All such pretensions to fix a sabbath, on account of such meetings, appear futile and absurd.

But as to Paul's preaching at Troas on the first of the week, we may observe, that Paul had been there seven days, and as his manner was to attend the public worship on the Lord's seventh-day sabbath, as has been made to appear from scripture, and there was no other day of public worship as a weekly sabbath among all that professed the true God; I think a fair inference on that occasion, will allow, that as the disciples had attended the public worship of God on his holy seventh-day sabbath, according to his command, Lev. xxiii. 3, and as Paul was about to leave them, never more to see them again in time, they concluded to have an evening meeting on the evening after the Lord's sabbath, for that is, in scripture, called the first of the week; for from even unto even God commanded his people to celebrate their sabbath, Lev. xxiii. 32.—So they might have an evening meeting on that occasion, and a supper for St. Paul and his companions; or it might be in way of the Lord's supper: however, it is not so recorded. Be that as it may, there is not the least intimation in this text of a first-day

sabbath, that I can find. So then, in case we look for a sabbath from the example of Christ and his disciples, and indeed all his disciples from scripture account, we shall see their uniform example, as to a sabbath, was, by attending to the Lord's commanded seventh-day sabbath, and no intimation of any other in scripture. I shall, by and by, shew where a first-day Sabbath came from.

But, says the enquiring mind, was not St. John, (Rev. i. 10.) in the spirit on the Lord's day? and was not that day the first day of the week? I answer: No doubt St. John was in the spirit in the isle of Patmos, and on the Lord's day; and if we attend to scripture, we shall find that no definite day of the week has any thing like the appellation of the Lord's day, save the seventh-day sabbath, which is called the Lord's sabbath day, &c. in numerous places, but no such idea is given of any other day of the week. The Lord's day, or day of the Lord, in scripture sometimes, has reference to some extraordinary manifestation of the divine agency, of judgment, or of mercy. See Isa. xiii. 6. Joel ii. 1. Zech. xiv. 1.—And such an idea is so often in scripture, that I need not quote them.

As for the Lord's day, as being applied to the first day of the week, no such intimation is found in scripture.—But admitting St John was in the spirit on the first day of the week, and saw a great vision, &c. will that constitute a sabbath to be observed weekly, without a divine command, any more than Ezekiel's visions on the fifth day of the month; (Ezek. i. 1.) or Isaiah or other of the prophets, that tell us of the time and manner of their visions, &c.? Surely it cannot: Therefore all pretensions to fix a sabbath on such pretexts, are at best but begging the question, and vain.

But perhaps the antinomian disposed mind may say: Does not St. Paul, in several of his epistles, intimate that there is no weekly sabbath, for christians to observe as holy time? I would observe: In case St. Paul meant to inculcate the idea that christians were not held to moral obligations and the observation of God's law as a rule of life, he must be very inconsistent with himself, and consequently, prove he had not a divine mission to preach; for he tells us, Rom. iii. 31. "Do we then make void the law thro' faith? God forbid: yea we establish the law." And vii. 12. "Wherefore the law is holy and just and good." And altho' he became all things, to all men, that by all means he might save some; yet he tells us, 1 Cor. ix. 21. "being not without law to God; but under the law to Christ." As to his observing, Rom. 14. 5. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike." If we consider the context, it is evident he had no reference to the sabbath, but rather to those days the heathen or superstitious Jews esteemed lucky or unlucky days, or some of the feasts of the heathen on days dedicated to their idols, &c.—The same will apply to his observations in Gal. iv. 10. "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years," &c. So again in Col. ii. 16. "Let no man, therefore, judge you, in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moons, or of the sabbath days; [17.] which are a shadow of good things to come," &c.

Now it is evident, from numerous texts of scripture, that at the time the apostle wrote those epistles, there was a number of pretended teachers of religion, who still insisted on circumcision and the observation of all the ceremonial law of Moses; notwithstanding the de-

cision of the apostles and elders, as in Acts xv. 28. and we may observe, in that controversy and decision of the apostles, there was not one article in dispute, that is contained in the ten Precepts: and the result of their judgment, directs the christians to abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication—[what a pity it is that christians, now-a-days, do not more attend to that advice.]—not the least dispute about the sabbath, or the moral obligations of God's holy law. But the apostle seems to exhort his brethren at Coloss, who doubtless were Gentiles, to give no occasion for any to judge them; or give no offense to Jew or Gentile or the church of God, in those things that were shadowy or ceremonial, &c.—which brings us to consider the nature of shadows or signs, for as has been observed, the Lord's sabbath is called a sign, in Exod. xxxi. 13, 17. and Eze. xx. 6.—Now, the word *sign*, often occurs in our bible, and appears to signify or mean a mark or token, footstep or representation, or a miracle or wonder, &c. Hence the miracles that Moses did in Egypt are sometimes called signs; and the people asked our Saviour to shew a sign, no doubt meaning a miracle. Again it imports a mark, or token that by one certain thing or appearances, some other thing or event, will surely come to pass or had been done heretofore, as the feast of the Passover was a sign to Israel, not only of the glorious Saviour promised that should come, but also of their deliverance out of Egypt, as may be seen Exod. xiii. 9. So the censors of the rebels was ordered to be made into broad plates for the altar for a sign, Numb. xvi. 38. So the angel tells the shepherds of a sign, that they should find the Babe

wrapped in swaddling clothes, laying in a manger, Luke ii. 12.

However marvellous it may be, that our kind Maker saw fit to give mankind his sabbath; it appears to me, the principal end of the sabbath as a sign, was and is, much similar to the sign in the Passover of the Paschal Lamb, that served to bring to their remembrance, the bondage and servitude and deliverance from Egypt; as also the assurance that Christ should come to atone for the sin of their souls, and deliver them from death, and bring them to glory, &c.—Hence the Lord's supper has succeeded in the christian church, as a sign or memorial of Christ's death,—that has passed, and all that observe it in faith, manifest their faith in that grand sacrifice, as well as their hope of deliverance from wrath; and this is to be done until he comes again, “for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” 1 Cor. xi. 26. So the seventh day in case it be kept according to the commandment, is a sign that we believe in the true God, that made the world and all things therein (or man) and gave him his law, and the law of the sabbath, that he might remember that God rested from his works at creation and blessed and sanctified that holy day for his use, that man abstaining from his worldly labours and occupations, might contemplate God and their divine original; as also adore and worship that God, who gives them all things to enjoy—Hence it was the sabbath that was the criterion to distinguish those people and nations that owned and served the true God, from those other nations that worshipped false deities: as we find by all account we have, both sacred and profane, that the original cause that the first day of the week was called Sunday, was,

for that the heathen dedicated that day to the worship of the sun; and so of the other names of the days of the week that differ from the order of scripture—And it appears that the observation of the days, distinguished mankind as much, in former days, as the name of Christ and Mahomet does now-a-days.—(This idea will more fully appear, when we consider how the first-day sabbath was introduced into the christian church)—And God's law was to be written on the posts of their door, and gates, and to be talked of when they went out and came, and when they sat in their houses, and diligently to be taught to their children, and to be bound for a sign upon their hands, and as frontlets between their eyes, [see Deut. vi. 8.] that they might not forget to serve the true and living God; and turn to idols.

And here we may notice that the law of the seventh-day sabbath, appertained to the first table; and is certainly, as much of a moral precept as any in that table. Now the word *moral* being derived from manners or the mind that directs the manners of a person, (as it is not found in scripture) in case the mind cannot be exercised, so as to affect our manners towards God, in the transgression of his law, as relates to the first table or himself, as well as towards our neighbour, we might doubt of the morality of the sabbath—But such an idea is so far from being correct, that it is evident from all scripture that we cannot injure our neighbour, with design, without displeasing God: hence, “he that transgresseth in one point, is guilty of all.” James ii. 10.—so perfect and entire is the sacred law of God. But some modern christians pretend to a moral law of love: (vain hypothesis!) but it is to be feared when they closely examine that law of love, it will be found to consist in self, or creature

love—As they choose their own way, let them see to it that God does not choose their delusion, as is threatened, Isa. lxvi. 4. If we love God, we shall manifest it by keeping his commandments; if we love ourselves, we shall also manifest it, by following our own way.

But to return to our Sign. We have considered the Lord's sabbath as a sign, to remind us, of things past, or the beginning:—Let us now consider it as a sign of some good to come; and if the land of Canaan was a sign, type or shadow of the world to come, or the state of the blessed, where there will be no sorrow or affliction, even a new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; as saith Peter, in his 2d Epi. 3. 13. which is promised by the divine Saviour; then surely the right observation of the Lord's sabbath, is a sign, or type, of that rest that remaineth to the people of God; as Paul saith, Heb. iv. 9. some have vainly attempted to construe the rest that the soul obtains by faith in Christ, as the antitype of the sabbath.* But if we attend to the drift of the apostle's argument, in this whole Epistle, we may easily correct that error. Now the rest obtained by faith, is only a rest of the soul, and that by times, and chiefly by way of anticipation, of what shall be hereafter—Therefore, the apostle exhorts to labour to enter into that rest that is to come, or shall be hereafter in a future state. Now, if future glory is to consist of ceasing from hard service and tumultuous noise and bustle, and to be in repose and quiet, and in the pure and perfect devotion of God; how lively does the true observation of the Lord's sabbath, represent such a state!

* See a book, by one Crandall, published some years ago.

Much more might be said on this idea, but the limits of this book will not admit of it.

Now if we consider the Lord's sabbath as a sign of what is past, it is to be kept perpetually or to the end of time; as it began with time, so it was evidently designed of God, to continue through all time, as God was and is perfect so his law is perfect, will not admit of any alteration, &c. if we consider it as a sign or type of something yet to come. All allow, that types should be kept, or shadows attended to, until the antitype comes, or the substance of the shadow comes to our possession. Consequently, Paul's observation was not at all designed to lessen man's obligation to keep the Lord's sabbath. But saith another, does not St. Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 3, tell us something about that which was written and engraven on tables of stone, although glorious, was to be done away? in the 13th verse about something which is abolished, &c.? Very true—and we should be very careful lest we wrest some of his writings to our own destruction.

Now if St. Paul designed by this passage, to invalidate the holy moral law of God, contrary to the general drift of his doctrines and his manner of practice, as has been stated, he would prove himself a false apostle, surely. But this is not the case, my friend, by any means;—Paul never designed to invalidate that which was holy, just and good. If we attend to St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, we shall find that they, as a church, had got into many and great improprieties, and, as well as the Galatians, had received or admitted teachers among them of the same kind, that taught the necessity of circumcision and keeping the ceremonial law; and to build themselves up as leaders, had tried to invalidate Paul's

character, which brought Paul to the necessity of speaking in his own commendation, as well as that of the dispensation of the gospel—Therefore, when he is bringing the contrast between Moses and Christ, or between the former dispensation and the present, he considers justly, that Christ and the gospel dispensation, far exceeded, in glory, the former, or Moses and the law dispensation.—And as to that which is abolished, if we attend to the same apostle, (Rom. x. 4. and Gal. iii. 24. with Heb. x. 1.) we may see the apostle had an allusion to the law of worship or ceremonial institutions, which were done away in Christ; or if we consider it more largely, and take in his text, Rom. vii. 6, where he saith —“ But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” We shall see, that he had reference to the deliverance of the soul thro’ faith in Christ, from that state of death and condemnation their sins (which by the righteous law of God, being set home on their conscience) had brought them into—But not that the moral law as a rule of life was dead, or abolished: Paul might as well turn antinomian at once; or, as the nature of law is to kill and destroy the transgressor; and as life only can come to poor sinners, thro’ Christ, and the glorious display of the gospel—So the christian, being killed by his sins, as made exceeding sinful by God’s holy law, flying to Christ for life, with a disposition to believe, love, and obey God in keeping his commandments, has life from the dead, and by their repentance and faith, and renewed obedience to God, they are dead unto sin, but alive unto God, not living under the condemnation of the law, because

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they keep it, as much as in them lies, and the law, in a certain sense not being made for a righteous person, the force and nature of it is gone, and they draw no hope from the flesh, but their confidence is in the glorious Saviour. And I would seriously ask any real christians, if they ever obtained a full deliverance in their mind, thro' faith in Christ, unless they had a disposition to observe and do, what they understood was God's will, or his moral law—For Christ came not to save people in their sins, but from their sins, and to cleanse them from unrighteousness; and sin is the transgression of the law: Hence there is still need of the law as a rule of life, altho' the law cannot give life; and as Paul tells us, "there is a glory of the stars, and a glory of the moon, and a glory of the sun." 1 Cor. xv. 41. So I may say, There is a glory of the law, and Moses; and another glory of the gospel, and Christ: and another glory in the future world of glory; for now we see thro' a glass, darkly; but then, face to face. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. And I would farther observe, that in searching the bible from Genesis to the end of the Revelations, (aside from man's traditions or doctrines) there can be none, not the least idea, gathered, of any servant of God, or of Christ, who was sent to prophesy, or to preach the truths of God; but they uniformly taught, and observed the Lord's seventh-day sabbath.—

And as to the morality of the fourth command, can any sober, real servant of God, that has common sense, think, on due reflection, that God did not esteem the fourth command as much a moral precept as any of the ten, when he placed it in the middle of his law, and commanded those ten precepts to be kept in the ark in

the most holy place, where no ceremonial law was kept, and annexed the same punishment to the breach of that as the others; and when we find the prophets reprove the neglect and breach of that, as severely as any one precept, and give as great promises to the due observance of it as to any command? and add to this, that all christians, until of late, have considered the breach of the sabbath as a breach of a moral precept, &c. as well as all codes of laws made by christian rulers have considered it as such. But vain man would be more wise than his Maker; and wise above that which is written. So also, some have objected to the holiness of the sabbath, or of time, as if man's actions constituted holiness. If we reason fairly, we shall remember, that it is God, and not man, that made or constituted all time; and God only, has a right to say what is holy and clean, and what is unholy and unclean. It is not man's devout or holy exercises, that makes time holy. Surely such things are defined by God's law; and I see no scripture or fair reason but teaches that time is or may be holy, as much as names. Now, God has said his name is holy, [but the name of false gods is not so, even if poor superstitious men should so think] and they that take his name in vain are guilty. So also, God has said, The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, &c. holy to the Lord,—and that the profaner of it is guilty and shall be punished. But he has not said so of the first-day or of any other day of the week: neither has he left it for man to reckon as he sees fit, and say, a seventh day, or the seventh part of time, by hours, days, months or years, &c. Nay, verily, God has reckoned the order of time from the first day of creation, and the evening and the

morning constituted one day—[The evening reckoned before the morning, as all was darkness until God said Let there be light, and there was light.]—so of every day of the week; and the seventh day he blessed, sanctified, hallowed, or made holy to himself. Man should have holy exercises on that day, surely; but his exercises do not make the time holy in God's account—for if man's exercises makes time sacred or holy to God, why was Jeroboam's altering the day of the feast of the Passover, (1 Kings xii. 32.) and making the calves, &c. [now it is absurd to suppose that Israel at that time, had any more faith in those calves as the true God, any more than the Romish church now have in their images, only as representations of the true God, &c.] always termed so great a sin to Jeroboam and all Israel.

And here we may notice the futile objections some make respecting the uncertainty of the order of time since the creation. As the revolution of the earth round the sun (or the sun round the earth if you please) in about 24 hours, constituted or determined the space of one day; so in that period of time, it was one definite day throughout the whole globe of the earth—And so it has ever been reckoned by all nations of the earth; as there is no dispute as to the order of the days of the week;—those that keep the seventh day, observing it as God's command; and those that observe the first day as a sabbath in the christian church, do it as the first day of the week, (not the seventh) on which they suppose the Saviour arose; and the Mahometans observe the sixth day of the week as such, in obedience to their pretended prophet Mahomet, in distinction from Jews or Christians—and not because there is any dispute about the order of time, or of reckoning the days of the week.

But, says another, if the law of the seventh-day sabbath is still binding on christians according to God's solemn commandment, then the man that gathers sticks or kindles any fire, even for to keep him from freezing or starving, must be stoned to death, &c. And why may we not as well complain of God, because he has, and may again, call his servants to lay down their lives for his cause, or rather than disown the name of Jesus, or sacrifice to heathen gods, give up their life. The Saviour saith, if we love father or mother, or wife or children, or our own life, more than him, we are not worthy of him—cannot be his disciples—and if we seek to save our lives, we shall lose them, &c. But don't let us run wild, and pervert the scriptures, merely to please our own fancies.

Now the case of the man that was found gathering sticks—(Numb. xv. 32, 33, as also Exod. xxxv. 3.) “Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.” I think any sober man of common capacity, in case he is disposed to obey God, in his commandments, and will take the trouble to search and compare the scriptures, will find, that the man stoned for gathering sticks upon the sabbath, was not gathering them for necessity's sake, but rather by way of clearing land, as it was a long time they dwelt in the wilderness, and more particularly in presumptuous rebellion against the positive commands of God,—like him that cursed: for we find in this same chapter, there were offerings to be brought for those that sinned ignorantly in any of the commands: but the soul that did aught presumptuously, or in despite to the command of God, was to be utterly cut off. The same idea is brought forward by St. Paul,

Heb. vi. 9. and x. 28, &c.—It could not have been a **mere** transgression thro' ignorance or even frailty of nature, but rather a wilful setting himself against God.

Again; if we consider the nature of things and circumstances, there is no such idea in all the scriptures, as a man's being guilty in matters of real necessity.—Witness the case of David, in eating the shew-bread; as also the priests that offered on the sabbath day, and were blameless—They could not offer sacrifice without fire, and some labour. And if we take the idea of keeping a sabbath of rest, it will not admit of extreme hunger or thirst, or of being extremely cold, or of great fear, &c. Hence the people of God have been justified in defending themselves from their enemies on the Lord's sabbath in some circumstances, that such an absurd idea as is started in the case before, cannot comport with the good character of God, and the real necessities of his poor creature man; and no such idea is couched in the command, or found in all the practice of God's people, who have observed his sabbath these five thousand years. But let none take a liberty from hence, to do, on God's sabbath, what their vain fancies may think are works of necessity or mercy, when God's word will not warrant them so to do: nay, "Bake that ye will bake, and sethe that ye will sethe, to-day; for to-morrow is the Lord's sabbath." **Exod. xvi. 28.** We may make preparation on the day before the sabbath, for things comfortable on the sabbath, without having much labour to do on God's holy day: and where real necessity intervenes, we may labour and not be guilty before God—as real necessity knows no law. Men and bodies of men have in various ages of the world, undertaken to define for others, what

those works of necessity and mercy, that is warrantable to be done on the sabbath, are—But I conclude it is a very nice point, as much depends on circumstances, motives, &c. what may be lawful in one circumstance, is unlawful in another circumstance: and as we cannot know the motive of another, and are imperfect judges of another's circumstances; and as every one must give account of himself to God—charity would incline us to let every one answer their own mind in such cases: provided their actions do not injure their neighbour, or the cause of God. And on a general scale, it is possible that God's law is as often broken by people in the exercise of their mind, as it is in their actions and words; for God's law is spiritual, but man is carnal.

Let us next consider, so far as we are able, the manifest causes that produced the command for the sabbath. The first cause rendered in scripture is, that when it had taken the work of a God six days, to make this world with its appendages, and numerous and various inhabitants, and man in the image of God, for the top piece or ruler of this world, under God—God ended his work on the seventh day, (not on first-day, nor on the sixth day) and he rested on the seventh day (not a seventh day according to man's reckoning or pleasure, but the seventh day in God's order of time) from all his works which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made. (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) And this is the first cause rendered in the fourth command in the decalogue, Ex. xx. 11. The question then is, Has man any right without an express command from God, to set apart another day in lieu of the day God set apart?

Another obvious cause for the sabbath, is, as man had labour or work to do, especially after his fallen state, of a worldly nature to provide for his sustenance, and could not in his nature endure incessant labour, neither apply his mind with equal force, to two distinct objects at one and the same time: so he might have that day on which his God had rested, and set apart for rest, and to holy exercises, to rest and refresh his body, and to turn his mind from his worldly concerns, to meditate and to worship his God. (Hence even cattle were to rest.)—And as man was made for society, and capable of instructing their children, servants, and others, in the things that concerned their souls and the cause of God—so it was needful that a set time should be prefixed for the congregation to get together and unitedly acknowledge their God in public and external devotion, and thereby not only manifest their faith in the being that made them, but also inculcate the system of religion on the rising generation and their fellow mortals, and hence we see the express command of God for gathering the congregation on the Lord's holy sabbath. (Lev. xxiii. 2.) And it is observable, that no other day of the week in all the scriptures (except when feasts came on other day) have we a command of God for gathering the congregation for religious services—in order that mankind, old and young, masters and servant, might have a day of rest from their worldly concerns, and devoutly meditate on the affairs of their souls, their God, and things that concern their future state.—Hence the propriety of preaching, praying and singing, in public worship: and how inexcusable will parents, masters,

and guardians of children be, at the awful bar of God, in case they refuse, or neglect leading those under their care, to the public worship of God, on his appointed time: and we may here remark that no nation or even sections of the community (in ordinary cases and times) who entirely neglect attendance on public worship, let their religion be what it may, but soon lose their sense of divine things, and their morals, as by all account we have in history, sacred or profane, ancient or modern, as well as our own knowledge in this case, so necessary is a standing, stated ministry in religion, not only for the souls of mankind, but the peace and good order of society. Much more might be said on this idea, as a cause, as that of witnessing that the Lord is the true God, and in respect of future rest and felicity, &c. &c.—but our limits will not admit of it.

Now has any of those reasons ceased, by the gospel dispensation? is not God the same, and his authority the same? is he less worthy to be contemplated on, obeyed, and worshipped, than when he first made man? is man still in a state of labour? does he still need rest and refreshment, and instruction, &c.? can he now apply his mind with equal force to two distinct objects at the same time? is the peace and order of society, and the worth of the soul, of less value than of old? Surely, no. If so, the causes of the sabbath has not ceased; and of consequence, we are equally holden to it as a moral and perpetual law.

Thus, then we may plainly see, if we will not shut our eyes and turn away our ears, that the seventh day of the week (not a seventh day, or the first day, or no day) is positively, the sabbath of the Lord thy God; has ever been since time began, and ever will be until time shall

end, in the account of God, and of the same universal and binding nature on all, let professed Christians or Mahometans, attempt to constitute another day, to the contrary notwithstanding. And let us remember, that this law of the sabbath is a part of that law by which God will judge us in the great day of account. (Rom. ii. 12. Luke xii. 7.)

Were the Israelites the saints of the true God; and is the real christian the true Israel of God; let such beware how they despise the God of Israel's sabbath, lest he disown such. Was the glorious Saviour less the Saviour of Israel, than he is of the Gentile nations; for salvation is of the Jews or of the Israel of God; then let us have Israel's God, and Israel's Saviour, and Israel's Sabbath, if we would be the true Israel.

It is now time to give some account how the First-day became introduced into the christian church, as a sabbath. And I would first observe, that in case I could be, and felt clear in my conscience before God, and observe the first-day as a sabbath, I should, long ago, have embraced it as such; having no doubt that, in all human probability, it would have greatly added to my worldly interest and reputation—And now, I am in some measure sensible, that this book may remain long after I am dead and gone; and in case I should misrepresent truths with design, to please man; will it not meet me at the bar of an impartial Judge?—The account I shall here give of that matter, of the change of the sabbath or introduction of a first-day sabbath into the church of Christ, is taken partly from Bamfield, Carlow, and other histories I have seen and read; and partly from inferences I have gathered from reading the bible and other books, and the circumstances of the world of mankind; on ma-

ture deliberation—And first we may challenge all mankind to produce one scrap of authentic record, to prove that any such thing as a command to observe first-day as a sabbath, not only from God, or from any man or body of men that professed the true God or Jesus Christ, until near 200 years after the Christian æra: and very little if any colour of any such command, can be found before the time of Constantine the Great, in the fourth century; and not until after real miracles had ceased, &c.

Now I do not presume to say, that man's motive, in introducing first-day as a sabbath, was not good, as they conceived; at least, as good as the introduction of Pedobaptism—for it is evident they were introduced about the same time, but from different causes.

Now our scripture in part, and more particularly ancient Ecclesiastical history, informs us, that towards the end of the first century, and even in the days of the apostles, there were many new and false teachers, and pretended preachers of the gospel; not only of the Jews' extraction, who insisted on circumcision and the keeping of the ceremonial law, but also, of the Gentile philosophy or Plato extraction, or tenets—Those last were denominated Gnostics, under a notion that they could restore mankind to the knowledge of the Supreme Being; and of this tribe of teachers, there were a variety of sects: and it appears that Simon the Sorcerer, we read of in Acts, who was baptized by Philip, was one of them; as also the Nicolatans. Now there was degrees in the extravagance of their doctrines and pretensions; but a very leading idea of them all, generally, was, the plurality of Gods; and at least two original Principals, one good, and the other evil; and that the God of the Jews

was not the supreme Lord of all, but rather a Tyrant, that usurped power over the human race; and that the principal business of our divine Saviour's coming into the world, was, to destroy the empire of the God of the Jews. Hence, those sects generally rejected all the old Testament, and the Gospels, and some of the Epistles, as not agreeing with their theory or philosophy: and in general, they denied the real body of Jesus Christ, and his sufferings, &c. Those sects increased in numbers, and popularity, after the apostles' days; and altho' they were considered heretical by the christian church, as a body; yet many of their ideas were embraced by some of the most influential doctors of christianity,—as one Origen was a man of great learning and abilities, and greatly flourished about this time; and notwithstanding his attachment to the Platonic system, we have no certain account but that he kept his standing in what was then called the true Christian Church.—He was the introducer of what we now call Final Restoration of all Mankind, and was strenuous on the idea of interpreting scriptures, in a mystical sense, or by way of allegory.*

Some of the great men in the Christian Church, about this time, undertook a coalition of all Religion; and formed their system partly from the Jewish theology, and partly from this Platonic or oriental philosophy, and partly from other heathen superstitions, &c. Now as those

* For a more accurate and lengthy account of those and such like ideas, I would refer my reader to Hannah Adams' *View of Religion*, and to Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, &c. There were a great variety of names and sentiments among those sects; see, *Bardesanists*, *Cainians*, *Manicheans*, *Saturnians*, *Valentineans*, *Origenists*, &c. &c.

that held to the necessity of circumcision, separated from the body of the Christian Church soon after the apostles' days; and such a great variety of sects and doctrines springing up about this time; all of whom pretended to be Christians; and all Christians about this time being subject to the persecutions that arose against them, from the Jews who were at some times their bitterest enemies, and from the various worshippers of the heathen gods; it seemed a matter of necessity that great concessions should be made in order to the peace of the world; for the Roman empire seemed deluged with the blood of the inhabitants.—Christians, in cases where a fair prospect appeared, would defend themselves, and when they got the power of the civil magistrate, would persecute and destroy their opposers: (so far had the pure doctrines of the gospel been generally corrupted, as is abundantly evident)—add to this the natural idea of benevolence and condescension the gospel teaches, together with the great zeal about this time, manifest to obtain converts to the Christian profession, and to enlarge the bounds of the church—(as it is evident by Mo-
 sheim and others—that in some instances what was called pious frauds were often, if not universally, resorted to, i. e. fictitious miracles, and pretended writings of the apostles and first leaders of the church)—also the idea of Christ's rising on the first day of the week—(and there is no doubt, but that it had been a practice that many of the christians had given some tokens of respect to that day on that account, as rising about the time they supposed he arose, and praying and singing praises to the risen Saviour, but not in neglect of observing the Lord's seventh-day sabbath)—and as superstition increased abundantly about this time—They also

honoured the days the martyrs laid down their lives, and often held their meetings in their tombs or burying places, and praying with their faces to the east, and using the sign of the cross, &c. &c. &c.

Again; it is evident that the leaders of the church about this time, altho' real miracles had generally ceased, still held to the infallibility of the true church of Christ, and that they had a right by divine authority to make laws for the church—(if not for all nations; and here is the seeds of the pope's supremacy, which soon after obtained in the Church Universal, then so called.) Now, as all the before-stated ideas and practices did exist, and is matter of fact, as being practised more or less very universally in the christian church, towards the end of the third century, I think no person acquainted with ancient history will venture to dispute—Hence, of course, those leaders of the church at this time, might argue like this: The evils of persecution are great and destructive, and charity inclines us to believe that many if not all those sects, which have been cut off or have separated from the church, may be sincere worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ; and possibly the Jews and heathen are sincere in their way of worship; and it is generally allowed, that there are in fact, a number, at least THREE Gods.*—And as the church has a right to make laws, and as condescension is commendable, and unitation desirable, in all; let us, as we cannot give up Moses and the prophets without also giving up Christ, and as

* *The idea of a Trinity, and the word, were received into the Christian Church before this time: Mosheim informs us that one Theophilus, a preacher in the church (if I mistake not) of Antioch, was the first introducer of that word, about the year 161 after Christ.*

the people are zealous to celebrate the day the Saviour arose,—now let us appoint Sunday as the Christian Sabbath, and call it the Lord's Day: those attached to Moses, perhaps, will consent for peace sake, and think, as the church has a right to make laws, it is immaterial if so they do observe one day in seven or a seventh part of time: and as to the heathen, when they see that we worship on the same day that they generally worshipped, and for a long time, had dedicated to the Sun—this also is dedicated to the Son, of God, and all allow of a number of Gods—they will be apt to join with us; at least, they will not be so bitter against us:—As to the Jews, they crucified the Lord, and the wrath has come on them to the uttermost, we need not fear them:—[their temple and nation had been destroyed before this time. . . . The reader may observe, that the foregoing, is merely my own ideas of what they might argue at that time under such circumstances.]—therefore as it would be too burdensome for the people to observe two days out of every week as a sabbath, we will call Sunday the Queen of Days, and the Lord's Day, &c. and appoint it for the Christian Sabbath: and to confirm it beyond all dispute, we will have an Epistle from Heaven.—

Consequently, there was an Epistle, said to be from heaven, found on the tomb or altar of St. Simeon, in Golgotha, where Christ was crucified. [See Bamfield's History, and Carlow has something of it.] Said Epistle was considered so holy; that no one dared to take it, for three days, and as many nights: but the people, who were struck with terror, cried to God for mercy; and after three days, the patriarch erected himself and Akarias the archbishop, and stretched out the bishop's mitre, and ventured to take it into his hands, &c. The contents of

that Epistle, as given by said authors, is too lengthy to be cited in this book—It may be sufficient to observe, as to that piece of priestcraft, that it complained of the Christians for not keeping holy the Dominical day, or Sunday; and it enjoined the keeping of the sabbath from the ninth hour of the seventh day, until Monday rising of the sun; and also, the festivals of the saints or martyrs, and threatened them with many judgments, in case of refusal, &c. [I would here note, as I have not Bamfield's History now by me, I am not certain whether this Epistle, said to come from heaven, was previous to Constantine's time, or after.] However, it is evident that much was made of this pretended Epistle from heaven; but it appears that all would not do, to introduce the change of the sabbath, as a general thing, until Constantine, the then [fourth century], emperor of most all the known world, and who ruled in absolute manner: he having, by some means or motives, been brought to profess the christian religion, and paying great respect to the clergy, was induced to decree a law, about A.D. 315, to enjoin the forbearance of labour on Sunday, except in affairs of agriculture. [See the Abbe Millot's Elements of General History, vol. ii. page 234.] And so by degrees it appears that the bishops, popes, kings and emperors, by the power of the civil sword, established the observation of Sunday or first-day as a sabbath, in place of God's Sabbath, in the Christian Church. It was, at first, common for many to observe both days; and after that, part of seventh-day and all first-day; and finally, all first-day alone: and I am not certain, but that (by said Histories) the first persecution to bloodshed and death, that we have any account of, as Christians' persecuting Christians, was on account of this change of the

Sabbath:—and it is evident, that all that would not then submit to the decree of said popes, bishops and emperors, as to said change, were either put to death, or banished.—Hence the few in number that still keep the Lord's Sabbath.

I much regret, that the limits of this book, and the want of leisure, will not permit me to be more copious and particular on this point—but I must omit it.

From the natural hatred the Gentile christians bore to the Jews, and the natural propensity that man has to choose his own way, and the chimerical notions they draw of God, by their philosophy, aside of Revelation; together with a pretext for unity and conciliation, with a large share of superstition,—we may find a first-day sabbath introduced into the christian church, and supported and established by the civil sword, in place of the Lord's sanctified Sabbath day.—And let every candid, christian-disposed reader, seriously answer the following question: The *first-day Sabbath*, was it of *God*, or *men*? Those who do not fear being stoned, I conclude, will readily answer: It was of *men*. And if the Seventh-day Sabbath be of God, why we do not observe it, is for all to answer at the bar of God.

What little I have written on this subject, being only a brief abstract from some of the most material arguments and records of Bamfield, Carlow, &c.; together with my own ideas on the subject, is only intended as an addition to Carlow; and I would refer the inquiring mind to his book, and to Bamfield—but more particularly to the bible, if they wish stability of mind, or to serve God.

If sincerity in the way we were brought up, will excuse us at the bar of God, for the transgression of his positive command, I see not but that the idolater may be

equally excused, as no doubt many of them are sincere. If worldly interest and conveniency, will excuse us, I see not but that Jeroboam might have been excused for his altering the day of the Lord's feast. If by faith in Christ, we are dissolved from our moral obligations to God and man; let us turn antinomians at once, and eat and drink, &c. for to-morrow we die. And if, after all, we plead ignorance of the Lord's sabbath; we may as well at once deny the Lord that made us, and gave us his Revelation—for we must know, in case we do really believe the bible, that the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord our God.

I could have wished to have given my ideas more lengthily on this point, as also to have made some remarks on the just observance of the sabbath, &c.—but it cannot be admitted in this short treatise.—We must therefore hasten to our conclusion; and leave the event of our performances to the over-ruling providence of a merciful God.

☞ The reader is to understand that the Sabbatarians, as much as any religious sect, wish to cultivate christian charity, and to fellowship all that God's word will warrant them to fellowship; and charitably hope of those they cannot fellowship.

CONCLUSION.

I FEEL under some necessity, to make some apologies for myself, respecting this book: as on account of many errors I expect will be found in it, such as, repetitions of the same ideas, and great neglect of attending to all the most important ideas on the different subjects embraced in this work:—but not for any designed misrepresentation of any truth, circumstance or matter of fact. I freely own it does not so fully answer my own mind as I could wish; and I have little reason to think that the minds of others will be fully answered in the case. If my readers will consider, not only my want of ability, time, and suitable encouragement to defray the expense of publication; but also the great neglect of some, in sending forward the materials of the historical part, even until after it was contracted to have been sent to the press; that I had so little time to compile it, and instead of having a friend to peruse it, and to help me transcribe it, no mortal but myself and the printers, ever saw all of it; and some part of it, I am not certain of ever having read after the first hasty draft; and was obliged to send it in parts to the press, for the want of time: and as I was obliged to write it by piecemeals, sometimes half an hour, and sometimes less, (being often called off to attend the avocations of the present life) in my embarrassed situation; that I have regretted by times, my undertaking to publish it—expecting to gain neither

praise nor profit in this world, by mankind:—I say, when all those circumstances are considered, perhaps my readers will make some allowance, and not censure too hard, in case they should find errors. All I have farther to say on that matter, is, I hope some abler person and pen may do more ample justice to the various subjects contained in this book, than was in my power to do, under present circumstances.

From the account and observations contained in this book, any judicious person may see the impropriety of the Sabbatarians' extending their external fellowship to any other denomination of Christians, or the consistency of their holding to what is called Close Communion: for if external fellowship is built on the written word of God, (and I see no other stable ground to build it on)—and if the receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper is considered as the only proper token of full external fellowship, and I conclude all consider it so, and if the Sabbatarians hold the whole ten Precepts of the moral law of God, to be still as binding on all christians as a rule of life, as the precepts of the gospel are, (which I expect all the well-informed Sabbatarians do) and if by bidding others God speed, by an external receiving and fellowshiping them, make them partake of their evil deeds, [2 Epi. of John, 11.] I can see no propriety in fellowshiping externally, any thing and every thing. man may call religion and gospel order—even admitting they are as sincere as can be: as it won't do to fellowship externally on sincerity, or good feelings, and frames of our own or others' minds, as has been observed—For by the same rule that we may dispense with the Sabbath, as an article of fellowship, we might also with Baptism, not only as to mode, but in toto: and also with all forms

and modes of worship, and church government, doctrines and actions of men, even to the Nicolaitans, Papists, &c. Now we have a number of express scriptures, that forbid our eating with, or fellowshipping certain characters, as disorderly walkers, and evil doers, &c. And I must confess I know no way to determine such characters, but by God's word or law, for sin is the transgression of the law. Now it is thought, that there can be no real, candid, sober person, upon due reflection and examination, (if they admit the bible to be of divine authority) but must confess, in case they will be honest before God, that the Sabbatarians, in the article of the sabbath, are RIGHT, and have the truth as to faith, whatever they may think of their practice. Now, if we would be like the apostle John, that loving disciple, we should love people in the truth, for the truth's sake; and not think by sophistical arguments, or the force of the civil power, to over-bear them, or turn them to error.

I have heard, and seen in books, many prophecies, calculations and arguments, about the Millennium, or thousand years reign of Christ upon earth in the latter day glory of the church, as tho' nigh at hand—and to be brought about by some revolutions in the political transactions of the nations of the world, in the present state of things. But how absurd are such notions! and how unlikely is human policy and the civil sword, to unite all classes of the human race in peace, and the pure worship of the true God! when it is utterly out of the power of man or any body of men, to compel their fellow mortal to render one act of pure devotion. Now some have tho't and with great reason, that when that period does in

fact take place, (in case it takes place in the present world) that all mankind would observe the Lord's seventh-day Sabbath. Truly, unity is beautiful; and pleasant it is for mankind to love as brethren, and in proportion to the strength and extensiveness of that union; so is the happiness of it.

The next inquiry is, how shall that unity of all Christians, be brought about? and what shall be the standard for them to come together at, or upon? As to the standard, can we look for any other than God's word? as Jesus has promised to be with them under that standard to the end of the world. And as to the means to bring so desirable a situation about; is there any one, within the reach of mortals, more likely to effect the end, than for all denominations to lay aside the spirit of persecution, and censorious judging, especially in doubtful matters of faith; and also all their errors or religious practices that they have not a Thus saith the Lord, for, in his word, as also those mere speculative ideas and doctrines, that have arisen by construing the written word in a mystical sense, or from deep and obscure passages in the scriptures, and attend to the plain obvious meaning of the text of scripture, which is able to make one wise unto salvation thro' faith in Christ Jesus—and leave out of the question, the civil power to enforce any doctrine of faith or conduct, as merely relates to the church or cause of religious worship; and in place of a persecuting spirit, put on charity, as the bond of perfection; and in place of censorious judging their fellow, and a suspicious or jealous eye, have fervent prayer to God for themselves and their fellow mor-

tals; and in place of the civil power, to enforce obedience to the truth, see that all walk in the commandments and ordinances of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ with a meek and lowly deportment, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, striving only to excel one another in acts of benevolence to their neighbour, and vital piety towards God; in a word, be really Christ-like in heart, lip, and life, truly subjected to God's order of government as revealed in his word, and acquiesce in his governing providence. If such a resolution was universally adopted, and really pursued; how would Atheists and Deists tremble! and the common people magnify the cause and people of God, and believers be added! How would the Jews look about themselves—[while now they have for excuse, that as the bulk of Christians observe the day formerly set apart to the sun and idolatrous worship, in the place of God's sabbath, they infer that the leader of this people was a breaker of God's law, and consequently an evil doer; and what benefit, may they say, can mankind derive from the doings and sufferings of an evil doer? So we may see that the poor Jew is blundering in unbelief, by the practice of professed Christians.]—and embrace the gospel, &c. Therefore, is there not room for all denominations to perform? And first, I will begin with the Sabbatarians—not presuming they are perfect in practice, whatever they may be in faith. Would it not contribute towards effecting peace and unity, not only in the limits of this sect, but universally, for all that profess the Lord's sabbath, to pay more strict attention to a due observation of it, according to the divine command? Is there not room for many families, to be more attentive to the pub-

lic worship on that sacred day, and less attentive to visiting and to worldly conversation, and indulging their children in wanton plays, instead of leading them to meeting? Is there not room for heads of families, to be more frequent and fervent in calling their families together, and praying with them, especially on the sabbath; to attend to read portions of the scripture, and inform the children's minds by way of comment, and see that the children and servants read useful books on the sabbath at least; as God seems to threaten to pour out his wrath on the heathen and on the fanatics that call not on his name, (Jer. x. 25. and Ps. lxxix. 6.) Is there not room for reform and improvement in family government in general? and is it not possible that they, as a sect of Christians, may improve in many points of church discipline? Will God's word warrant them in indulging members that move out of the reach of the church they covenanted with, and remaining in no church that can properly discipline them, (when such churches are near) and they do not join such church in their own fellowship? Have they a Thus saith the Lord, for the common practice in neglecting the support of the gospel, and of the unequal way of bearing burdens generally? Would it not tend to peace and good order, were they, as a sect, more attentive to inform their minds, by reading their bibles and other useful books, the nature and order of God's government in his church? And is there no room for some among them, to be more liberal in encouraging useful publications? Is there no room for their preachers generally, (as well as myself,) to endeavour to correct their language in general, and in the pulpit in particular, and see that they use not words improperly, at

least, not, words that have no meaning, or such as neither themselves nor hearers know the meaning of? And would it not be well, for preachers to preach less themselves, (by telling the hearers of their own feelings and resolutions, &c.) and more of Jesus Christ, his law, and gospel, &c. And is there no danger of preachers, by habit, indulging an improper tone, in place of true eloquence, and of operating more on the passions, than the understanding of the hearers? And, as it is a maxim, that ignorance is the parent of superstition, is there no danger that such as may be opposed to improvement in useful knowledge, may mistake superstition for real piety and devotion? In short, as the import of the word Christian, is to be Christ-like, is there not room for all classes of the community to learn the lot and station God in his providence has assigned them to fill, and to really be more what they profess to be?——I trust my reader will allow the foregoing inquiry to be at least civil questions, and answer them in his own mind, at his leisure: as they are not meant for any particular person, so I hope no one will be offended; for if ignorance is the parent of superstition, in fact, those that oppose useful improvement, and are offended at truth, indicate that they are either superstitious or are mere worldlings, instead of being real christians. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me,” saith the Saviour.

And in order to accomplish so desirable a thing as unity and universal peace, and order, in the christian world; would it in any degree prevent the desired attainment? Should the first-day Baptists, as a denomination of christians, not only attend to the foregoing queries, but also endeavour to cast the beam of the Lord's

sabbath, out of their own eye, by really keeping his positive command as well as his ordinance, in order that they might see more clearly to pull out the mote of form, in their brother's eye? Would it be amiss for them once more to read and well consider their bible? before they get into an habituated notion of another sabbath than the Lord's sabbath, or no day for a sabbath, &c.? as well as to examine closely whether God's word will warrant them in all they hold as doctrines; and see if some of their doctrines are not more the commandments of men, than God's commandments; in short, meet their brethren on the standard of the written word of God, according to its natural and obvious meaning, as regards faith and practice.

But, some may say, he assumes the place of monitor, &c.—It will be readily allowed, that in most cases it is much easier to prescribe rules, than to practise them—And as I would wish to take my full share in both, I hope no one will be offended; “for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doer of the law shall be justified,” saith our great apostle, Rom. ii. 13.

And may not the Catholic Baptists, so called, or all other Baptists, in case they wish for so desirable a thing as universal love and unity among christians, in addition to the foregoing observations, enquire closely, and see if none of their allowed conduct does not admit sincerity for truth, or creatures' judgment and feelings in the room of God's sacred standard, and examine whether or not, the cause of their so often dividing and subdividing and finally in some places becoming extinct as a church, is or is not owing to building on the sandy foundation of creature invention, viz. superstition, fanaticism, enth-

siasm, sincerity, and conceited good feelings, in place of building on the Rock of ages, even God and his revealed word—Possibly there may be room for some improvement or alteration in some of their proceedings in religion, either in government or practice, if not in articles of faith, &c.

And how is it with the Methodist denomination? Surely method and order are good: but notwithstanding their open communion to all, have they nothing to alter in?—Are they perfectly righteous in their own eyes? Do they despise others? Would they wish all mankind to be Methodists; or that all would walk as Christ walked, and be christians? Have they a Thus saith the Lord, in his word, for their mode of government or discipline in the church? Did Christ allow baptism to be performed as the creature might choose? Did he exclude any from the public meetings in case they had heard and seen three times, and yet would not join him? Did he make it a matter of fellowship, whether his followers prayed so many times a day, or whether they prayed vocally at all? And did Christ intimate as tho' man's piety and devotion chiefly consisted in much noise, and appearances, in loud and long prayers, and repetition, &c.? or in falling down in order to be sanctified? And did he tell his disciples, that after the christian religion had got established, and churches organized, that any one of them must travel all their time among those regularly established churches, and try to get the people to rend themselves from the covenant they had made with their brethren, and join in the particular mode and doctrine of that one, thereby intimating or insinuating, that, that one was perfectly right and the rest entirely wrong, &c.?——Possibly on close

inspection, and comparing their conduct and doctrines, with God's standing word, TEKEL, would be found written against some of their allowed conduct. And they also, might amend, reform and improve, in order to accomplish universal unity among all christians. At least it may do them no harm perhaps, to see to it, that they teach and act according to the law and testimony of God's word. And in case there must be a general contribution, to make out the fund, of peace and unity among all, and if the rich should give more than the poor, and yet every man as he purposeth in his own mind, as God loves a cheerful giver, may we with due humility ask our ancient and honourable, rich and learned neighbours, the Papist, the Episcopalian, the Puritan or Presbyterian, and Congregational Independent, &c. how much we may calculate upon from them, to make out the sum total.

I beg none may be offended at a poor ignorant beggar when he asks an alms, or pleads for charity; and as wisdom and wealth, as well as learning and strength, may reasonably be expected among the ancient and populous — especially, in case one has the art of transmuting things, or can turn bread into flesh, and blood into wine, just as they please; surely where much is given, much will be required. Will you, for the sake of universal peace and unity, condescend to meet your brother worms, on the standard of God's revealed word? Will you please to cast off all you have not a plain command, in God's word, for? Or will you please to shew us fairly, in God's word, where you have power to make laws in violation to God's laws? where he has admitted his professed people to make likenesses of men, or any other

thing, to bow down to? and where he has directed us to pray to departed souls, or to use the sign of the cross, or only to pray towards the east? or in what chapter and verse we have an account of Purgatory; and that by giving money to a priest to say mass, souls may be delivered from their torments, &c.?—and many other such like things, too tedious to enumerate.

Where is it recorded, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, that he told his apostles that one was greater in power or authority than another? or that the bishops might lord it over God's heritage? Where may we find, in all the doctrines and examples of the meek and lowly Saviour, that he allowed his preachers to call on their brethren for tythes, and in case they would not, or could not, pay so much, and at the time your bishop pleased, to take it by force? (like the sons of Eli of old.) Or where may we find his warrant to the civil magistrate to use the sword to compel obedience to any of his laws, or to persecute for conscience sake in any case whatever?—Where do we find him telling his disciples, they must attain such a degree of knowledge in the sciences of the world, before they may be admitted preachers of the gospel? And where may we find his command to baptize infants? at any rate; much more, to sprinkle, and call that Baptism. And once more, please to shew us where he commanded his disciples, to do that which he never did; i. e. brake God's solemn commanded sabbath, and keep the day the heathen dedicated to the sun, in idolatrous worship, &c. &c.

Now, my respectable neighbours, in case you will really lay all such like things aside, or show a plain Thus saith the Lord, for all you will retain; doubtless you will

contribute much towards the desired accomplishment of universal peace and unity.—In such a case, I might say, for one, here is my hand, and here is my heart, to meet you on that ground in love and unity.

And here is our respectable friend Quaker, sitting silently by. He has grounded his fire-arms, manifesting no disposition to fight or oppose. Also the Shaker, and sister Jemima—Why, if they are few in number, or small of stature, or even females, possibly they may cast off, or cast in, something—as ‘every little helps,’ and the widow’s two mites is commended. We also read of old that the wise hearted women spun goat’s hair, towards making the Lord’s tabernacle. And altho’ the Almighty may not choose to dwell in temples made with hands, yet if our bodies are surely the temple of the Holy Ghost, as Paul intimates, 1 Cor. iii. 19. surely we may have something to do with our bodies in order for Christ to reign in us, &c.

Well, then, neighbours, what will the spirit admit you to cast in, or cast off, in order to effect the grand plan of entire peace and union? Will you please to remember, there is a time and season to every purpose under the sun?—a time to speak, as well as a time to refrain; a time to mourn, as well as a time to dance: and is there not a time for young women to marry, and guide the house, as well as to set themselves up as a leader of a new sect? And has not God, in Christ, appointed a time for his worship, even on his seventh-day sabbath? And has not Christ ordained and practised external ordinances, &c.? Does not a time of probation still continue? And are we not yet in a visible body?—Has the world of nature or mankind, materially altered

from what it was in the days of our Saviour's flesh? Has any real cause intervened since then, to alter man's obligation to his God or his neighbour? Is there not as much need of faith now, as there was then? And is there not as much need of external modes to manifest that faith, as there was when the divine Saviour, who knew what was in man, was bodily present with his disciples? Has he given man any standard of faith and practice? or any standard to try the spirits by, other than his revealed word, or contrary to that divine oracle? Can a soul be visible without a body? or, what would such a soul be called? Has it ever been the course of the Almighty's conduct, to call man to speak in his cause, or influence such with extraordinary powers, in ordinary times and cases? And is there not the same rule to dispense with all appearances of religion, even words, that there is of one positive command or ordinance, that God has given? Will you please to demonstrate your right to neglect or contemn the solemn ordinances and commands of Jehovah, by any real miracle? they were confirmed at first by real miracles, you will allow; is it not therefore reasonable to suppose, in case the institutor were disposed to alter or disannul them, he would also confirm such a commission by miracles?——Please to consider these and such like ideas, and attend to the scriptures, or rather the divine Saviour, who has directed us to search the scriptures, as well as to search our hearts, intimating that in them we think we have eternal life. Then let us beware how we invalidate the scriptures.

(Now Plato and some other heathen philosophers, by the light they had, could give good rules of manners;—

but they nor you, aside from the scriptures, can give any assurance of eternal life, or tell us how to attain that life.)

I trust, it may do you all no harm to hear the invitation, to cast into the treasury of the Lord, in order to accomplish universal peace and union—Therefore hope none may be offended.

Now, in case all denominations of christians, would thus cast off, or cast in, as the case might be, and consent to meet on the standard of God's revealed word, it would indicate something like a Millennium. But if we have bitter envying and strife, even in our hearts, such peace and union will not be apparent—For if we bite and devour one another, let us take heed lest we be consumed one of another.

But viewing the rising generations, for whom I have a peculiar regard—permit me my young friends, of all denominations, classes and colours, into whose hands this book may fall, to ask you some questions, and give you some advice as a dying man; altho' in order to engage the attention of some, I may have used some quaint or odd expressions, and gone thro' the whole book in a very brief, and perhaps rough and intricate order; yet the subject matter, especially the latter part, is of serious and of important concernment to all souls. May I therefore ask you, or will you rather ask your own souls, what you think of a Millennium? of Christ, and of his cause? of religion, and your own soul? And if Galio careth for none of those things, let him think assuredly, a time will come when he cannot avoid thinking of those things, and of feeling too the consequences of not attending to them now.

But, says another, I am young—time enough when I am old, to think of those things. Remember, time is not at your command. Do you know you shall live until you are old? In the burying place you may see graves shorter than you. And says another, I am in the pursuit of the world, or am about marrying a wife, and therefore I cannot attend to those things.—Remember, the world passeth away with a great noise, and what shall it advantage you, if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul? or is a wife of more value than your soul? Judge judiciously, and rightly estimate all things: Possibly this very night thy soul will be required of thee; yea, rather attend to those things yourself, and incline your wife to do the same.

Another may say, You direct me this road or day, &c. and my father tells me of another road and day, &c. and a third tell of, no road, and of no day; and another tells of a Mahomet as a saviour, and of a sixth day, &c. and some tell of all as being happy; and others of this soul you tell so much of, will be extinct by and by, &c.—And what shall I think, and how shall I form my judgment on those things? Some even say, there is nothing in religion, it is all priestcraft, &c.——Why, my dear friend some things you certainly do know; and all other things essential to happiness, you may know, in case you rightly attend to those things now, in God's time of visitation. You do know, that you are a living being; and from what you see and feel, you must expect to die.—You do know, that something within you makes you superior to the beasts of the earth, and the monsters of the seas, and the fowls of the air: This is certain; it is matter of fact.—You must know this, whether I, or your father, or another, tell you so or otherwise. You must

know, also, that this certain something, we call the soul, gives you the pre-eminence over those other beings you see; for it is not your bodily strength that does it, that this soul having such faculties, makes you capable to contemplate, to reason on things, calculate and contrive, and also makes you conscious that you are accountable to your own soul, to your fellow mortal, and to your Maker; for by this time (in case you are endowed with common sense) you must know, you did not make yourself. But who did make you and all other beings, and gave you those superior faculties, and still protects and supports you? where does he live? and what is his name, &c.? You do not know; and alas, you cannot know, by all your present faculties of nature—For as you may reason and fix on one thing or being as your Maker, so your fellow being may reason and fix on another object or being as your Maker; and he has just the same right so to do, as you have; for he is your equal in this respect; and has the same right to compel you to acknowledge his supposed maker of all, as you have to compel him to acknowledge yours, (unless you allow strength, a right, and one is stronger than the other—which in this case, is no right at all.) And you do know, that in case he should prove stronger than you, and compel you by force to acknowledge his supposed maker, it would not alter your mind as to the being you had fixed on, in the least; (so free and independent are all souls.) Neither could you, with any propriety at all, render his supposed maker any true devotion—It would be morally impossible so to do, unless the other had convinced your mind, by fair reason, that his was the true maker, &c.——In just such a situation mankind would all now be, were it not for the power of custom or tradition, and divine Re-

velation. These things, so far, I think all must know.

All the human race we have any account of, in all ages that have exercised their reason on this point, have agreed there is, in fact, some one or more supreme and divine Originals as the first cause of all things; and accordingly have paid their acknowledgments to such as they supposed was their maker or supporter, &c.—For mankind in all ages, have not been so totally ungrateful to their supposed maker, as not at some time to pay some acknowledgement to their deity or maker—that in our language is called *God*; which acknowledgment, &c. is called religion or devotion or worship. You also do know, that you have not a consciousness of guilt for what another has done, as before hinted. All have done it, under some external or outward form or mode, as a manifestation of their faith, or from tradition. Now as poor mortals' reason, is finite or limited, and their judgment imperfect, failable and uncertain—which you, my reader, must also know certain, as a matter of fact, even by your own experience and observation—I say, (and so saith all worshippers of the true God, unless we allow Deists to be worshippers of the true God, and Heathen, and Infidels, &c.) that the true Maker, or God supreme of all, in order to put this matter out of dispute among the nations of the earth, or for his own glory, or to display his glorious character, and divine attributes, as also for the peace and happiness of the human family, or for reasons to mortals unknown, was graciously pleased, to make a divine Revelation of himself to his creature man: in which Revelation he has condescended to inform us, something of his nature, power, wisdom, goodness, &c. and why and how he made man, as well as other beings and things, and how man apostatized from him, and the

consequence thereof, &c.; and also his infinite goodness in providing them a Saviour,—[And here I would observe, that the gospel was preached to save the souls of men, even before the law, as a rule of life, was ever given by God after the fall of man; and why was it ever given at all, if it was not to last as long as man's state of probation lasted.]—in which also God informed man, the way he must conduct to please him, and the outlines at least, of his worship; in fine, his obligation and duty to his God, to himself, and his fellow mortals, in the various ages stations and relations in this life; as also of the nature, faculties, accountability, and durability of the soul of man; with promises of rewards here and hereafter, to the obedient—and threatenings of punishments, here and hereafter, to the disobedient, &c.—And to confirm this Revelation of God, as worthy of a good God, there is in it by far the best system of morals that ever was known. [And it is more than probable, that all the ancient philosophers who have attempted to give a system of morals, have had the benefit of this copy of God's Revelation.] And I may say it is a perfect system....converting the soul: and it was confirmed by stupendous, divine and real miracles, before multitudes of witnesses; some of which at least, no man has ever been able to disprove, altho' they have tried their utmost with the help of the devil. Now this divine Revelation, we call Scripture, or the written word of God, is the truth of God; and by which, (and I may say, which only) we do know there is a God, and who is the true God, and Maker of all—and ever has been the standard and criterion to distinguish between the True, and false gods; for altho' there have been a multitude, who have attempted by their reason, or some impulse of their minds, to

set forth another God and laws, &c. there never was any could confirm their mission with real miracles; and consequently all pretensions and directions given by man, in opposition to his God's Revelation, has ever been considered false, by all the true followers or worshippers of the true God; and the receiving or believing of this divine Revelation, has ever been the distinguishing mark of the true people of the true God: hence, it is true, and no lie—a matter of fact; and we may all know it, so far as we can know any thing of the kind—And it is tho't, that if Deists or Infidels would take half the trouble to believe and obey this divine Revelation, that they do to disbelieve, there would not be a Deist in the world:—and in short, I doubt whether in fact, there is such a being, which has well read and considered our bible. Now according to this Revelation, a divine Saviour or seed of the woman was to come, in the fulness of time; he did actually come, or appear, and also witnessed his mission by the most stupendous and salutary miracles, that were real matters of fact; and witnessed to the law and the prophets, or said Revelation; and taught as relates to faith and morals, agreeable to the Revelation before given—For had Christ or his apostles, or even all divine teachers, taught another system, it would unavoidably have destroyed both—so nearly is the law and gospel connected. True he was more clear and explicit in many points of morals, but as a system it is the same, and must remain so, or he was another God, or the first God, and Revelation was imperfect; which will equally destroy both, as before stated—Hence he sent his divine missionaries into all the world, to teach the glad tidings (not of a new god, or another god, or revelation, differ-

ent in the main points) that God, according to his promise, had sent the Saviour, who died for our sins, according to the scriptures, and was raised from the dead according to the scriptures, &c. (Observe there was then no such thing as scripture, save the Old Testament.)—Hence, we find the great apostle of the Gentiles “witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come,” &c. Acts xxvi. 22. Now compare this text with Acts xxiv. 14, and Luke xxiv. 27. and in short, all the writings of all the apostles, and see if we can find a release from moral obligations, or from the seventh-day sabbath. Add to all this, the glorious triumphant Saviour appears, as in the presence of God, to intercede for all that will come to God by him, (or all that will attend to God’s Revelation) and in order that no mortal may have excuse in the great day of account, he sends his spirit to enlighten and convince, or reprove the world; as, “the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man, and the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” &c. Observe, this true light ever corresponds with God’s revealed and written word, or both would be uncertain: and this light is what sheweth you clearly (as it agrees with the scripture as before observed) independent of what I or your father may say, what your God requires of you, in order for your happiness—Therefore my advice to you, in those things, is, to hear and attend to what your Maker has told you in his revealed word, in preference to what even your father or any other fallible mortal may say, to the contrary of that divine system of revealed religion.

Now to be more particular, by way of advice, I would

observe, that God's word enjoins on you, first, not only to believe this Revelation as come from God to be true, but that you shall not have any other God before him, or bow yourself to any likeness of any thing visible or in your conception as in distinction from him in order to worship; also, not to take God's name in vain; and also, to remember to keep holy his seventh-day sabbath, &c. as may be seen briefly in Exodus, 20th chapter, amounting to this: Thou shalt hear, love and obey the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, &c.; and thou shalt do to your fellow mortals as you would wish them to do to you in like circumstances, &c.—But perhaps my young friend may say, I have not done so, but the reverse; & I want to continue in my present pursuits; what next? I answer: God's word tells you to repent and turn to God: and he has promised pardon to the believing penitent; (see his word—as room will not admit of citations.) But will repenting of sin, atone for it? By no means: his word has informed you the plan of atonement; and saith the great Saviour: “Ye believe in God, believe also in me,”—not as another God, as I expect, but rather as the promised Saviour God had revealed in his word.—But our preacher says (and he is called a good man too, and a man of learning) we cannot repent nor believe, of ourselves. And can you walk or breathe, of yourself? As to what your preacher tells you, don't you for your life, believe him, when he tells you any thing on this point, contrary to God's word: you may as well turn to an idol: he is a creature, even fallible—If he speaks the mind of God, he will speak agreeable to God's revealed word, or will, as has been stated. And let him first shew you the place in God's word, where God has said,

you cannot repent, and believe, &c. I think God's word saith, faith comes by hearing. You certainly have ears, and have or may hear and read God's Revelation; for it is in thy mouth and in thine heart, "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 9.) And can you expect to be saved and be happy while you continue in your sins, that makes you so miserable? You must certainly know that also cannot be, let men say as they please about all as being saved; for Christ is not the minister of sin, neither came he (methinks) to save men in their sins, but from their sins. But some say, my soul, in case I still continue in my sins will be annihilated or die, as well as my body. If you have such a preacher, ask him to shew the place in God's word where it is so recorded. We read that the subtil serpent told old mother Eve she should not surely die, when God's revealed word had said, Thou shalt surely die. (Gen. ii. 17. & iii. 4.) Now such like contradictions are found recorded in our bible; but if we attend to the places we shall find the speakers are, God and his enemy: and we have a number of demonstrations that shew us the event, or whose word was true—And I cannot advise you my friend to trust to such an assertion: and as to that there is nothing in religion, &c. It is an old maxim, there cannot be so much smoke without some fire. Depend upon it, my friend, there is a divine reality in true Religion; even together with this divine Revelation I have been speaking of, for God has been wont to give the Holy Ghost to those that really obey him in his word, (see Acts v. 32.) to console their souls and to assist them in the self-denial road, &c. This

you in part also must certainly know, as for instance, I will suppose you have been used to tell the truth in matters you know, and here is a circumstance that truth will be against you, and you tell a positive lie; will you feel in your mind on due reflection and meditating on God's word and the consequences of that lie, as you would in case you had spoken the truth? Surely not.—Now do you go and confess that lie, and take all the shame to yourself, and consent to take the punishment, and make good the damages, that lie has done, and satisfy your father that you will do so more; and will you not feel more tranquil in your mind, especially in case your father tells you he forgives you, and still loves you, &c.?

So our heavenly Father has promised, and does in fact do, to the humble believing penitent, who cries for mercy: and have we one instance in all the scriptures, that Jesus ever finally turned any one, of any age, nation or colour, that in earnest humbly applied to him—Therefore, as it is a thing certain, that we have a soul that is invisible, so it is a thing certain, that the soul that enjoys the divine favour, has a certain enjoyment; and that there is, in fact, a divine reality in true religion.—And if you are not happy, my friend, in your soul, it is your own fault—God has given you a soul, that must exist in happiness or misery; which soul, by its faculties God has given it, is accountable: he has given you ears to hear, and a tongue to speak, and ask for such things as you need: he has also revealed his will and your duty; and also provided for you a Saviour, and has told you in his word how you are to conduct in order to be happy;

Q 2

and if you are not happy, your mouth will be stopped before God in the great day of account.—

These things you do know; and in case you wish to know Real Happiness, I seriously advise you to attend to God's word, or revealed will: read it, and ponder it well; that teaches you to pray to him for what you cannot do without.—And not only read it, but believe it as a divine Truth, a matter of fact; and believe no other scheme opposed to it, even if your father has believed it, and tells you to believe it;—and not only believe it, but also obey it—as faith without obedience, will do you no real good.

As I one day lay on my bed, I cast my eyes on my window—I saw a number of flies of different sizes, strength, figure, &c. also occasionally there came in a bumble-bee, a hornet, wasps, &c. Now the flies were chiefly at the bottom of the window, and appeared all crawling upwards; some would help themselves with their wings; but I observed, generally when the fly was in the middle or main of the pane, and attempted to use his wings to help him up, his head would be against the glass—And altho' many of them, by fluttering, &c. would get upwards, some farther, and some less, they nearly all would tumble down before they reached the top of the pane of glass or window. When the bumble bee came on his heft, altho' he made a great noise (so as to affright the flies) with the strength of his wings, &c. yet he would keep his head against the glass, and soon fall to the bottom, and sometimes down on the floor [and several I have killed in that situation.] When the hornet came on (as they eat flies) the flies in the open part of the glass would soon retire, generally to the

edge of the glass; some he would catch, and others he would affright away that I saw no more of them. The hornet also, in case he attempted to get upwards by the glass, would keep his head against it, and fall—and some of them I have killed. And much so of the wasp. I also observed that when the flies got close to the wood of the sash of the window, or on the sash, they would crawl up with apparent ease, even to the top of the window, and on to the plastering above, &c. But the bumble-bee, hornet, &c. would never attempt that path: whether they were too proud, or too big, to go in that narrow road, or disdained it, or what, I could not tell; so it was. I also observed that when the flies would leave the sash or the narrow streak just by it, which they often would do, and attempt to crawl up the open glass, they would fall or be caught by the hornet, or fly away, &c.—My curiosity led me to inspect the cause, of the flies' crawling up the glass while on that narrow edge so near the sash, with such ease, as before observed: and on close inspection I found that the painter in painting the sash (as his paint was white, and near the colour of the glass, was hardly perceivable) had let his brush just touch the edge of the glass, and had dried on, and was not so slippery as the rest of the glass, and the flies had a good road; but by the steady hand of the painter, it was as straight as the sash was jointed, and extremely narrow—so I found the cause.

On reflection, saith I within my mind, What may be learned by these insects! Why may I not moralize a little, as well as great men of learning? Well then, what a comparison will the flies bear with the human race!—All are creatures: all the odds in fact, is, man has reason as well as sight; and had the flies reason, they might all

have seen how easily their fellows got up when on the sash or the narrow strip by it; consequently, in case they had reason, their destruction was their own carelessness or inattention to the road left for them. (As the gift of reason makes accountability, and the soul immortal.)—And how does the glass represent the world of probation! wherein are slippery places, and false appearances of safety. How does the top of the window and the upper plastering, hold out the idea of another state of perfection! And how does the narrow strip represent Christ as a sash, and the narrow strip made so straight by the painter, represent divine Revelation, or the narrow road of morals just by Christ—both being fitted by the great painter of the universe, and closely connected—And how does the hornet suit the character of the devil! and the wasps, the wicked spirits: as also the bumble-bee, false teachers, great philosophers, &c. that make so much noise in the world, and have no notion to go on the narrow road, or on the sash: they want to see and be seen, &c. I have not room to enlarge.

Our scriptures and our Lord tell us of false gods, and Christs, of false spirits, and of false prophets and teachers, &c.—Consequently, there must be false systems, false doctrines, false customs, false ideas and conceptions, &c.—and in the proportion of their malignancy or sin: so will be the consequence of their errors. But all this does not by any means prove that there is not in fact one true and living God, and system of Religion that is true and matter of fact, but rather proves in fact there is a true God, &c. Therefore, I will close this advice with the poet's words:—

**Have communion with few,
Be intimate with one,
Deal justly with all,
Speak evil of none.**

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man: for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

FINIS.

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E R R A T A.

Page 15, line 25,	for leas, read, more.
21,	9, for 1778, read, 1773.
29,	23, for Newtights, r. NewHights.
51,	23, for Armenian, r. Arminian.
73,	24, for fules, read, rulers.
—	26, for sanhedruns, r. sanhedrins.
77,	31, for serve, read, secure.
108,	14, for did, read, died.

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THE writer of the foregoing work has it in contemplation (in case Providence should give leave, and suitable encouragement should appear) to publish what he calls, **A SCRIPTURAL AND REASONABLE SYSTEM OF RELIGION**; in chapters; wherein all the most important points of the Christian Religion will be treated on—The chief of which he has now by him in manuscript, written some years ago. It will contain about 300 pages, duodeclmo, and if well bound and lettered, will come, to subscribers, at \$1 per copy; and the common allowance to those that subscribe for a large number of copies.

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